
00058507

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from



HT Parekh
FOUNDATION

An Initiative by
HDFC
WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 15 October, 2018

AFRICA FROM SOUTH
TO NORTH VOL. I



Major A. St. H. Gibbons

AFRICA

FROM SOUTH TO NORTH THROUGH MAROTSELAND

By MAJOR A. ST H. GIBBONS, F.R.G.S., R.C.I.

Author of "Exploration and Hunting in Central Africa."

With numerous Illustrations reproduced from Photographs and Maps. In two Volumes Vol. I

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD

LONDON AND NEW YORK MDCCCCIV

Copyright 1904
by John Lane



Set up and electrotyped
by The Norwood Press, Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.
Printed
by The Caxton Press, New York, U.S.A.

THESE VOLUMES ARE

DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE LATE RIGHT HONOURABLE CECIL J. RHODES

PREFACE

Although the first or introductory chapter of these volumes contains sufficient prefatory matter to acquaint the reader with the objects and organisation of the expedition under discussion, a short supplementary preface written on the eve of publication may not be regarded as waste of space.

Fortunately in the book of travel popular notions do not demand any very high order of literary art. The leniency of the public in this direction is no doubt in a measure due to the fact that the exigencies of an explorer's life largely deprive him of the absorbing interests of the library and the study. Yet the pen is inseparably bound up with the more strenuous exertions in the field, unless indeed discovery and a knowledge of the more inaccessible parts of the earth are to remain a mere matter of selfish and personal interest.

To write an account of such an expedition as that which it was my good fortune to control from 1898 to 1900 is not in itself a difficult task. The difficulty arises with the necessity to confine the description within reasonable limits—to decide how much of the personal element may with advantage be discarded, and how much is necessary to convey to the reader a clear picture of the countries traversed, the characteristics of the tribes encountered, and the general conditions which the future traveller may expect to share with the author. Thus a few days' experience will in places be found to absorb a whole chapter, while in other instances three or four hundred miles are disposed of in almost as many words.

As in my previous book, so in these volumes little allusion is made in the text to astronomical and other observations. In my view these are as much out of place in what may be called the narrative of a book of travel as is the repeated detailed discussion of matters of every day occurrence by which some authors import monotony into otherwise interesting works.

These omissions may convey to the mind of the casual observer an impression of want of thoroughness, but to others they may impart a feeling of relief from boredom. Suffice it to say that with the serious explorer such observations are almost as numerous as his nightly camps. The data collected by my colleagues and myself have, of course, found their way into the study of the geographical expert, and so far as these volumes are concerned, the combined result is at the disposal of anyone who thinks fit to glance at the maps compiled from the work of the expedition. These maps are in no sense influenced by the work of other explorers, except so far as the longitudinal position of our base, Lialui, is concerned. This fixing is derived from the mean of "time" observations taken by Livingstone and Serpa Pinto, and is accepted by Mr. E. G. Ravenstein, the distinguished cartographic expert, as being at least very near the mark. If ultimately it transpires that the exact longitudinal position of Lialui is a mile or two further east or west than at present fixed, it follows that the whole of our map of the Upper Zambezi basin will require a similar readjustment.

Up to the date of the compilation of the appended map of the Upper Zambezi basin, very little work had been done in this part of Africa. Livingstone passed up the Zambezi half a century ago, and travelled thence along the northern slave route to Loanda. His Zambezi from the Victoria Falls to about 15 degrees S. latitude only differs from ours in detail. From this point to the Kabompo confluence there is a slight discrepancy in point of general direction. From the Kabompo northwards Livingstone did not follow the course of the river, but took a parallel course to the east, crossing near Nanakandundu, where he struck the northern slave route. This section as far as the source was therefore entered by him as the probable course of the river, based in fact on conjecture and native report. The impatience of rival map manufacturers has here, as in other instances, prematurely substituted the definite for the dotted line. In face of this fact it is not remarkable that the source of the Zambezi proves to be four or five days' march from the posi-

tion it has so long occupied on the maps, nor that this uppermost section of the river bears little or no resemblance to what we have been accustomed to regard as its course.

With the exception of Livingstone's Zambezi our knowledge has been confined to the precincts of the slave routes from the coast to Lialui and Nanakandundu respectively, which have been traversed by Cameron, Arnot, Capello and Ivens, Serpa Pinto, and occasional traders; by such information as has been brought back by travellers on the southern confines of the territory, and by the experience of the Portuguese explorers Capello and Ivens, who travelled for some distance up the Kabompo and thence across the Congo-Zambezi watershed to Katanga.

In this connection a few words are necessary in anticipation of a question which will very naturally occur to some minds, as, between ourselves and those who are responsible for the original mapping of these trade-routes, there are considerable longitudinal discrepancies. It may be asked, "Why, then, has not a mean been taken in the final determination of such positions in this latest map of the Upper Zambezi Basin?" The answer is two-fold. Firstly, it will be seen by a study of the map that the work has been done on a concerted plan. The frequent crossings of routes and communications with the base have supplied checks and counterchecks which would have exposed any pronounced discrepancy had such existed. As a matter of fact the various sections fitted into their places admirably, whereas to have "meaned" our work with previous fixings would not merely have thrown it into chaos so far as these routes are concerned, but would have seriously affected the map as a whole. Secondly, to justify a "mean" the value of the data employed should first be definitely established. Now, so far as longitudinal fixings along these routes are concerned the few that have been made are the outcome of "time" observations, either supplemented by the result of dead reckoning or not. I give not merely my own opinion but also that of no less an authority than Mr. E. G. Ravenstein, when I state that "time" observations for longitude taken in the far interior of Africa must always be accepted with reserve. The longer chronometers are subjected to the varying exigencies of travel the less are they

likely to give a satisfactory result, for apart from extreme climatic influences a shock on the march, or even more insidious irregularities, may throw the observer who relies on them many miles out of his reckoning, especially when it is considered that four seconds mean one mile. Of course if the chronometer gains or loses consistently the error is easily rectified by comparison with Greenwich time on reaching a telegraph line, but how many chronometers remain impervious to exceptional and temporary influences? In my view, dead reckoning is much more likely to give a satisfactory result, but this system can only be effective under certain stringent conditions. The explorer must not only walk every inch of his journey, but he must establish a consistent and unvarying pace. He must devote his whole mind to distance and direction, and never miss an opportunity of applying the partial checks introduced by means of latitudinal observations and compass bearings, and he must keep his daily route map on a sufficiently large scale to enable him to enter every hundred yards he travels. This has the additional advantage of insuring the introduction of reliable detail into his work. It follows that in order to insert those portions of the map printed in violet the longitudinal positions affecting them have of necessity been amended. So far I take full responsibility for them.

I have gone into this question in detail partly in explanation of the course I have adopted, but also with a view to emphasising the fact that even though I am justified in preferring to use our own fixtures without any modifications from without, no slur whatever is implied as affecting the reputation of those whose services in the field of exploration I should be the first to respect. Be a man's "time" observations ever so carefully taken, if his chronometer is inconsistent the result is at best only approximately correct. I have taken many such observations myself, but excepting those made in the earlier stage of the journey, they have been taken at what I conceive to be their proper value and discarded.

Four appendix chapters appear at the end of the second volume. They are a summary of the more serious conclusions arrived at as the result of experience in various parts of Africa.

Trade communications, material prospects, missionary enterprise and administrative method are discussed in their present aspect, and suggestions are thrown out as a basis for future reform.

If they wish it, let those who only read to pass away leisure hours shirk these chapters, and in a sense the book is complete without them, but I exhort all serious readers—those who would see our position in Africa grow not merely more potent in the direction of material development, but exert the highest possible moral and social influence over the hordes of barbarians whose future generations will develop useful or troublesome tendencies in proportion as they are governed intelligently or otherwise in the near future—all such readers I beg to give more than a passing thought to the questions raised and discussed, and whether they agree with my conclusions or not, to exert their influence in the direction of progress and improvement. In practice the "laissez faire" policy is retrogressive. In these days every educated man or woman has some influence, and most have more than they imagine.

I record the thanks of myself and the members of the expedition to those who came forward with supplementary grants in aid of the cost of the expedition—to the Council of the Royal Geographical Society, Sir John Ardagh, K. C. B., K. C. I. E., at the time Director of Military Intelligence, and the Directors of the British South Africa Chartered Company. These grants enabled us to materially extend the scope of our work, which it is hoped has proved of reciprocal advantage to all those interested.

A few words and I am finished. Personally I am not in favour of dedications except where special circumstances arise to justify them. I dedicate these volumes to the memory of one of the greatest Englishmen whose devotion to a grand ideal has earned for himself the title of "great" in the imperishable history of the empire. The special circumstance in this case does not arise in the sense of a mere desire to pay a humble tribute to the memory of a great man commanding the admiration and respect of all those who have personal experience of the far-reaching achievements the combinations of will and in-

tellect, of ideal and action, have effected within the short space of a dozen years, but in the fact that had not the genius and foresight of Mr. Rhodes created the situation which saved to the British Empire the vast territories lying to the north of Mafeking, these pages would never have been written, for the Upper Zambezi would have fallen into foreign hands in the early nineties, and the incentive to give the best part of my life to work in that country would not have existed. As it is I am proud to have been able, along with others, to have added even a single brick to the imperial structure planned, founded and organised by the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

Expedition into MAROTSELAND decided on — The principal objects thereof — Ultimate journey to EGYPT hypothetical — Ways and means — Selection of colleagues — Captain F. C. Quicke — Short sketch of his career — Captain J. Stevenson-Hamilton — Mr. Boyd Alexander — Mr. L. C. Weller — Mr. Theodore Muller — Mr. Ramm — Various methods of transport — Steam launches adopted for river travelling — Their chief characteristics and measurements — Supplies — Ration cases and their contents — Tents — Rifles and ammunition — Expedition entirely equipped in London — Shipped to Durban by the Rennie Aberdeen S.S. *INYONI* — Mr. Sharrer of Sharrer's Zambezi Traffic Company acts as agent in London and Chinde — Participation in the South African war prevents earlier publication of the work of the expedition 3

CHAPTER II

Goods trans-shipped to river steamer *Centipede* at Chinde — First trial of *Constance* in African waters — *Centipede* casts her moorings on July 18, 1898 — Emerge from mists of delta into dry clearness of interior — Scarcity of native labour — Pessimistic prediction of Portuguese commandant at Chinde — Shallows of the Lower Zambezi — Characteristic scenery thereof — Wave of enterprise in South Africa — Mount MORAMBALA and the SHIRÉ River — SHUPANGA — The old GOANESE house and Mrs. Livingstone's grave — Father Torrend and his mission — A GOANESE official refuses to sanction employment of boys — *Centipede* in difficulty — Dinner at SENNA with Senhor PINTO BASTO — A talk on colonisation — Tom the PONDO falls overboard — His "brother" Charles swims to rescue — Sandbanks again — The *Constance* under sail — Captain Hamilton and his dog in a game-pit — Digest of further journey to TETE — Arrival of Mr. Muller — He offers his services —

PAGE

Difficulty in way of acceptance — He accompanies us to TETE — An expert linguist — Slow progress — The Lupata Gorge — Goose *versus* fish-eagle — TETE reached on 9th August — Portuguese courtesy — Major Robertson of "Robertson's Cape Boys" — Departure from TETE — BAROMA, a Jesuit station — The *Centipede's* destination — Goods conveyed by barge to MESENANGWE — Formation of base camp — The river's volume — An apparent anomaly — Mr. Ross returns to Chinde — His services and energy 13

CHAPTER III

MESENANGWE reached on Aug. 13 — Difficulty in procuring adequate number of boys — Terms of engagement — Readjustment of loads — A parley with the boys — Visit from BAROMA — Attempt to transport boilers on trolley — Unsuccessful — One hundred porters arrive from CHICOA — They leave in Mr. Muller's charge — Flying visit to CHICOA — SENHOR IGNATIO DE JESUS XAVIER — A doubtful reputation — With Livingstone in '58 — A coincidence — Mr. Alexander reaches CHICOA — Return to MESENANGWE — Mr. Hepburn and his ill-fated companion — The latest news from Europe — Arrival of last batch of goods — More boys engaged — Two traders and how they frustrated their own ends — The launch of the *Constance* — The greetings of the commandant of KASHOMBE — Discouragements at outset — Overladened boats — Slow progress — The bursting of a tube — New plans — Loyal companions — Expedition to be divided — Three for Marotseland, the remainder for the KAFUKWE River — Mr. Muller becomes a member of the expedition — One launch with two engines for the Victoria Falls — Successful trial — Senhor Ignatio and his tribute of friendship 29

CHAPTER IV

A promising start and a hidden rock — Beached and repaired — A good day's progress — The CHANSENGA Rapids — Mr. Muller overboard — The lost treasure — Exciting search by native diver — The recovered belt — A picturesque gorge — An eddy and its legend — The KAKOLORE Rapids — An exciting passage — KASHOMBE station — A rock and leak — Beached and repaired — Mr. Muller bids us *au revoir* — Camp on a sandbank — A hurricane and its results — The boys grow restless — Desertion

PAGE

feared — Good progress — An optical delusion and its cartographic outcome — The *Constance* in a fair wind — The boldness of crocodiles — We rest at KANYEMBE — Senhor Loba's drums and fifes — ZUMBO frontier station — Exquisite scenery — Lupata or KARIBA — A suggestion — Visit from Portuguese commandant — His courtesy — Over the frontier — A tribute to the Portuguese — Another desertion scare — Sultan eats a goat — Captain Hamilton's painful accident — Good things to come — Zumbo tales and their effect on the boys — African credulity . 43

CHAPTER V

Superb river scenery — Inspected by baboons — A dangerous rapid — Hard and exciting work — Portuguese officer drowned — Stability of *Constance* — A lioness on the bank — Unsuccessful pursuit — A rhinoceros — Stiff current and slow progress — A bad leak and a narrow escape — Three days on a desert island — Heat and thunder — Captain Quicke bags a palla — A game country — The BATONGA tribe — The river more navigable — Lions around camp — Good effect on boys — Crocodile charges the *Constance* — More fine scenery — Snags and a wider river — The KAFUKWE confluence — Its falls and cataracts — Its future possibilities — Captain Quicke kills a hippo — The reward of greed — Local native robbed by boys — Compensation and deprivation — The germ of native friction — The bend of the Zambezi — The KARIBA Gorge — Dangerous rocks — The *Constance* unbolted — An immigrant South African tribe — The taint of Buluwayo — Boys demand higher wages — They leave in a hurry. 57

CHAPTER VI

The KARIBA Gorge and SANYATE River — Inaccuracy of maps — Local natives fight shy of boiler — Wholesale desertion and hot pursuit — Absconders overtaken and marched to camp — A lesson taught — Stiff currents — The KAIUNGWA Rapids — Detailed account of their passage — A navigable stretch — Glimpse of a lioness — The NANGILILA tribe — The KANSALA Rapids — Over the BATONGA border — The steamer's effect on natives and baboons — The LUTALA Gorge — Magnificent scenery — Perpetual movement — Uncongenial though necessary — Two more gorges — More scenery — A police corporal's camp — First news of battle of Omdurman, and Fashoda incident — Boy

PAGE

bitten by snake — The terrors of death — Non-poisonous and unhurt — Native enthusiasm on the banks — An amusing incident — The Zambezi and the MALUNDU Hills — Dangerous rapids — The end of navigation — Character of African rivers — Possibilities of the Middle Zambezi — The effect of the rains — Mr. Weller's experience six weeks later 73

CHAPTER VII

Rough and rocky — Ominous rapids — Molele and Sepanga — Eccentric conduct of fish — An apparent impossibility — Not so bad as it looked — Almost capsized — Difficulties increase — A critical position — Long fight for existence — Strain on the boys — All but wrecked — The last card — A narrow margin — Clear at last — The Devil's Gorge — Dark, dismal, lifeless — The Guay confluence — An everlasting barrier — Nineteen rapids in twenty-one miles — In a whirlpool — The end of the tether — Preparation for a land journey — An inhospitable country — The boys foodless — A dismal prospect — A reconnoitring expedition — Progress under difficulties — A night in the mountains — A troop of baboons — The hungry boys demand Sultan for dinner — Captain Hamilton demurs — The dead baboon — Semi-cannibalism — Half a mile an hour — A curious bed place — Scaling a precipice — The habitation of man once more — Scarcity of food — Near WANKE'S — A village on a hill — Food commandeered — Goods brought forward in relays — Captain Hamilton in blissful solitude — SICHIWENE cataract — *Constance* washed downstream — Desertion of five boys — Christmas Eve in the bush — Mr. Weller indisposed — Farewell to the *Constance* 89

CHAPTER VIII

New Year's Day, '99 — A journey westward — The natives of MAKWA — Taints of civilisation — Start for MAROTSELAND — A labour agent — A rough march — Scarcity of food — A steep ascent — The high veldt climate — Corn at last procurable — The African's power to consume or abstain — The traveller's greatest hardship — KAZUNGULA reached — The home mail — Arrival at SESHEKE — LETIA the king's son — Progress of civilisation — Not an unmixed blessing — Departure of porters for MAKWA arranged — AKANONGISWA — Her capricious treatment of her people — The "royal" cyclist and his suite — Mr. Coryndon's

PAGE

adventure with a lioness — A Kaffir dog — His depredations and tragic end — Hurried journey to LIALUI — Swampy valleys — Main points of interest — Arrival at MONGO — The Residency garden — Vegetables a luxury. 107

CHAPTER IX

Cordial reception by LEWANIKA — The loan of an interpreter — A doubtful record — Description of Lewanika — The vastness of his country — His tact as a ruler — The lesson of history — Lewanika suspicious by nature — The wisdom of calling him to the coronation — Arrangements for the future — Monsieur Adolph JALLA — BUROTSE in flood — Return to MONGO — A second visit to Lewanika — A map on the floor — Heavy rains — Cartography — *Au revoir* to MONGO — A final talk with the king — The royal toe itches — Compelled to travel in state — Godspeed from the "kothla" — The king's paddlers — Considerable rainfall — Author's good fortune in weather — Lower Zambezi boys as paddlers — A pitiable comparison — The soldier ant — His power of combination — The great MOKWAI — Her village and house — Hospitable as ever — Extra paddlers lent — A desirable mission station — The importance of a site — A fine piece of river — Expert paddling — The GONYE FALLS — Old friends and bygone incident — More rapid progress — Old associations — Arrival at SESHEKE — Responsibilities of leadership — An anxious night. 121

CHAPTER X

A history of the MAROTSE — Heterogeneous community — An unwritten constitution — Africa's mushroom states — Despotism and instability — Parallel to our early history — Verbal confusion — A table of tribal names — Link with the north — Invasion of BUROTSE by AÄLUI — The BALOKWAKWA — Alleged connection of Marotse with the BANYAI of Mashonaland — Dissimilarity of MAROTSE, MASUBIA, and BALOKWAKWA to surrounding tribes — Subject tribes in the early days — Expansion — Makololo invasion of the south — War with Matabele — Treachery meets treachery — A trek to BUTOKA — A Matabele raid — Raiders overtaken and punished — Checked by the MASHIKOLUMBWE — BUROTSE invaded and annexed — Matabele finally worsted — SEBITWANE'S death — MAMOCHISANE and SEKELETU — Makololo massacred by Marotse — Return of Marotse dynasty — Sepopa's cruelty — His assassi-

PAGE

nation — NGANANWINA succeeds, but is deposed by LOBOSI — LOBOSI driven into exile in '84 — His return to power under name of LEWANIKA — His desire for progress — Provincial government — The king's co-ruler — Genealogical tree — The classes and the masses 139

CHAPTER XI

A virulent insect — Mr. CORYNDON'S arrival — His knowledge of the Middle Zambezi — The success of river journey and his previous misgivings — Travel to KAZUNGULA — Captain Hamilton's arrival — His travel-worn condition — Mistaken for a missionary — Captain Quicke's diary — The worst class of native — Avarice personified — Captain Hamilton goes hunting — Disappearance of his canoe — Aquatic adventures of his boy — So near and yet so far — A long journey to a near point — Captain Quicke in solitude — Meditations and a tortoise — His boy's anxiety — An improvised drum — Captain Hamilton's reported disappearance — His reappearance — Captain Quicke settles down at MAKWA — Board at 3*s.* per diem — The contractor evades his contract — But not for long — LETIA'S porters arrive — The DAKA in flood — Difficulty in crossing — Captain Hamilton's progress barred — He follows to MAKWA — Persistent rains — Short commons — Stopped by UMGWEZI River — Food and demoralisation — An impossible situation — Captain Hamilton with one boy travels to KAZUNGULA — Attempt to intercept Captain Quicke — An impudent crocodile — Letter from Mr. Weller — Very bad news — Mr. Muller reported dying — Prospective failure of river party — Mr. Weller's ill-health — Trader undertakes to bring supplies from Buluwayo — Captain Quicke at SESHEKE — His adventure with lion and lioness — An anxious position — Stuck in the mud — Civilised man in uncivilised Africa. 161

CHAPTER XII

All assembled at SESHEKE — Captain Quicke visits Mr. CORYNDON and the Victoria Falls — Ready for work — The plan of campaign — A start — The Zambezi inundations — On the south bank — A domestic comedy — Full flesh pots in a poor district — Germany's white elephant — Arrival at MAMILI — The chief MAMILI — His preparations and hospitality — An interesting old man — His sixty years of history — Livingstone's first advent — A correction corrected — The "MAKOLOLO" of British Central Africa

PAGE

—A handsome kaross—The art of bargaining—Another Kaffir dog—His shrewdness and success—His downfall—The native and the book—The map and its use—Incredulity—Demonstration and wonder—Belated head men arrive—Luombomba and his fluency—Litsolo and his past—Niangana of the MAKWENGARI—A slayer of white men—LUOMBOMBA'S timidity and hypocrisy—The young CHIMBA-UN-GUNDU—Mamili's domestic circle—A shirker requited—Excellent subsequent effect 177

CHAPTER XIII

The LINYANTE swamps—Old Linyante, the Makololo capital—A battlefield—The victor's death place—Skirting the inundations—Captain Hamilton diverges—The KWANDO crossed—Three deserters—Swamps and snakes—MAKALAHARI villages—The MAG'WEKWANA—A puzzling conundrum—A hundred miles of wilderness—Meeting the Okavango overflow—Four days' march through water—A vast inundation—The reward of the mischief maker—Litsolo lamed—Luombomba's obstruction—An old, old platitude—The son of an exile—The penalty of royal popularity—The primeval Okavango—The influence of the centuries—Professor Gregory's opinion—Another effect of the Okavango overflow—Vast reservoirs—Mr. Reid's theory—A sacked village—An illicit love affair—Its developments—And tragic result—Reunited families—The African's lack of gratitude—On the Okavango River—Mampukushu settlers and the Maiye—Their respective characteristics—Thorns or water—Game and locusts 191

CHAPTER XIV

Wild game and Bushmen—An eccentric language—Habits of the Bushman—His diet and weapons—Scanty shelter—First step toward progress—The effect of the camera—A secluded village—Rising ground—Dense bush—Description of the Okavango plain—The MAMPUKUSHU country—First villages—The Okavango—A considerable river—Its course southwards—Its disappearance—The subsidence of Lake NGAMI—The POPA Rapids—Unreliable maps—Work for the explorer—A blind centenarian—His grievance against SEKOME—TEPANANA Island—LEBEBE'S messages—His rain-making powers—An hereditary craft—How Lebebe succeeded his uncle at the expense of his elder brother—Lewanika and

PAGE

Sekome — Their rival claims — The latter's "diplomacy" — On the verge of war — Lewanika dissuaded — Appeal to the British government — Visit to Lebebe — The usurper and his rascally entourage — A second visit — A messenger to LIALUI — An unexpected present — The Makwengari country — Origin of the Mampukushu — A short history. 207

CHAPTER XV

The much-dreaded Makwengari — Not so terrible as painted — Niangana's message — His early kindness to Lewanika in exile — On the KWITO — A sudden change in soil and vegetation — Dissensions among the chiefs — Promotion and degradation — An evacuated district — A day's sport — On the spoor of buffalo — A stern chase — The penalty of curiosity — A fine head — Two days' hard marching — The first Mambunda village — Flight of the villagers — KATIBA — His grievance — Continuous oppression — Silima — The same story — An alliance of the weak — A striking contrast — Luombomba again — A late start — High altitude — The river of the country — BAMBE and his plight — A scheme for delay — A painful accident — Luombomba's ignorance and perversity — The result — Tramp, tramp, tramp — Luombomba delays blankets — Scanty garments and a cold night — The balance of equanimity — A salutary lesson — An African courtesy — The game of trust . 221

CHAPTER XVI

In the valley of the LOMBA — A stockaded village — The slave trade of the interior — Its baneful influence — Wanted a Wilberforce — Europe's neglect of duty — The extermination of the labour supply — The bright side of domestic slavery — The dark side of the supply system — The cloak of free labour — A disunited tribe — MWENECHACHINGE'S tale — An unsuccessful sportsman — The wise man in the north — The prescription — Its failure and results — An excuse for a slave raid — Appeal for protection — Diplomatic obstruction — VALOVALE immigrants and the Mambunda — Their characteristics — The KWITO again — A large river — Its possibilities — A "black Portuguese" — A rubber country — A modest plant — The extraction of the rubber — An African yew tree — Valovale graves — The African's lack of sentiment — His respect for the dead and how he shows it — A comparison — Crossing the rivers of the west — An unstable craft — A swim in the KWEMBO 235

CHAPTER XVII

PAGE

Where the KUBANGUI meets the KWANDO — Disappointed hopes — No mails — Captain Quicke's departure — Captain Hamilton's non-arrival — A fatal throat malady — DIMBUDI a MAMBUNDA chief — Three baskets of corn and a pig — Dimbudi's presumption — A comical episode — Head men demand permission to return home — Trouble brewing — Two days with pen and ink — Disaffection disseminated — Litsolo warned — Affected repentance — Farewell to Dimbudi — Open meeting — A change of plan necessary — A few plain words — Native simplicity — Start for LIALUI — A Portuguese trader — Through MAKOMA — Head men curry favour — The theft of Jonas — Remanded — MOSIKA at home — His appreciation of praise — Loss of ten relatives — His own death a month later — Three hundred miles in a fortnight — Arrival at Lialui — Lewanika's surprise and anger — Captain Hamilton deserted — Monsieur Jalla's hospitality — Lewanika builds a compound — Jonas arraigned — His punishment — Good news and bad — An African hardship — Mr. Muller's death confirmed — A loss to Africa — The trial of Luombomba and Litsolo — An interesting tribunal — The dignity of the law — Verdict and penalty 247

CHAPTER XVIII

Captain Quicke reaches Lialui — Thin but well — His visit to the Victoria Falls — River journey — Visit to Lewanika at Mafula — His journey westwards — Everything red — Commandeered carriers — Tact required in dealing with them — The Mambunda country — A description of the people and country — Bark blankets — The first white man at KAPALI — Efficacious method of banishing evil spirits — A fatal malady — Sickening of a porter — A native remedy — The rubber district — Dimbudi's timidity — His subsequent dignity — Symbols of idolatry — Passive resistance — Native wealth and independence — Ovimbunda or Mambari — Travel-stained Englishman misunderstood — Insolence — Humility — Mr. Arnot's route — Marotse head men agitate for return — High altitude — Absence of animal life — The LUNGWEBUNGU — A fine river — Homely ways of the VALUCHASI — A few days' sport — Arrival at main camp — Lunch with Lewanika — His respectful treatment of the Great White Queen's portrait — A well-ordered table — Lewanika's commercial aptitude — His shortsightedness — A

PAGE

little advice — A monster bird hunt — Captain Hamilton arrives — A tedious journey — Desertion and sport — The BAMASHE — The food question — The water-logged KWANDO — Relief party — Journey to LIALUI — Mr. Coryndon's arrival — Arrangements for return home — A farewell dinner — The four points of the compass — Perfect unanimity — Misrepresentation through press — Time will tell 263

ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER

I. The Author . . . . . *Frontispiece*
(Photograph by Lambert Weston & Son) FACING PAGE

Major J. Stevenson-Hamilton, D.S.O. 6
(Photograph by Mr. W. B. Sherwood)

Mr. C. L. Weller 8
(Photograph by London Stereoscopic Co.)

Mr. Theodore Muller 10
(Photograph by Mr. Arthur Reston)

II. The Zambezi near the Shire Confluence 14
(Photograph by the Author)

Native Canoes on the Lower Zambezi 14
(Photograph by Mr. C. L. Weller)

Mrs. Livingstone's Tombstone 16
(Photograph by the Author)

House at Shupanga in which Mrs. Livingstone died . . . 16
(Photograph by the Author)

Digging out the *Centipede* 20
(Photograph by the Author)

The Pilot 20
(Photograph by the Author)

Upper Entrance to the Lupata Gorge 22
(Photograph by the Author)

Inyakuru—Portuguese Station 22
(Photograph by the Author)

How the Barge Sailed to the Foot of the Rapids . . . 24
(Photograph by the Author)

Expeditionary Effects on the Sands at Mesenangwe . . . 24
(Photograph by the Author)

III. Towing the Trolly up the Bed of the Mesenangwe River . . 32
(Photograph by the Author)

Carrying the Boilers to Chicoa 32
(Photograph by Mr. C. L. Weller)

CHAPTER		FACING PAGE
III.	The Overladen *Constance* (Photograph by the Author)	40
	The *Constance* as she ascended the Middle Zambezi (Photograph by Mr. C. L. Weller)	40
IV.	Zumbo—Portuguese Frontier Station (Photograph by Mr. C. L. Weller)	48
	Lower Entrance to the Kariba Gorge (Photograph by the Author)	48
V.	Carrying Game to Camp (Photograph by the Author)	62
	The Fat-tailed Sheep of Africa (Photographer unknown)	62
VI.	Diagram of the Kaiungwa Rapids (Sketch by the Author)	78
	Watching the Steamer from the River Bank (Photograph by the Author)	80
	Natives scared by the Sound of the Whistle (Photograph by the Author)	80
	In the Lutala Gorge (Photograph by Mr. C. L. Weller)	82
VII.	Purchasing Corn (Photograph by Mr. C. L. Weller)	90
	Lunch on the Zambezi (Photograph by Mr. C. L. Weller)	90
VIII.	Mr. R. T. Coryndon (Photograph by Messrs. Maull & Fox)	110
IX.	Lewanika at Home (Photograph by Rev. Mr. Pickering)	122
	The Gonye Falls { Above from the east bank / Below from the east bank } (Photograph by the Author)	132
X.	Exterior of Lewanika's House (Photograph by Rev. Mr. Pickering)	152
	Dancers and Spectators (Photograph by the Author)	156
	Marotse Dancing in Honour of New Moon (Photograph by the Author)	156
XII.	Old Mamili and Jack (Photograph by the Author)	180

CHAPTER FACING PAGE

XIII. A Midday Rest 194
(Photograph by the Author)

Working a Passage through the Okavango Thickets . . 202
(Photograph by the Author)

XIV. The Bushmen of the Okavango 208
(Photograph by the Author)

The Popa Rapids 208
(Photograph by the Author)

XV. Mambunda Woman and Bushman of the Kwito River . 226
(Photograph by the Author)

XVI. Rubber Plant—Landolphia Florida 240
(Sketch by Author)

Natives bringing in Rubber Wood 242
(Photograph by the Author)

Interior of Valovale Village 242
(Photograph by the Author)

A Valovale Grave 244
(Photograph by the Author)

XVII. Typical Mambunda Chief 248
(Photograph by the Author)

Dimbudi's Arrival 248
(Photograph by the Author)

The Nalikwando-Lewanika's State Barge 254
(Photograph by the Author)

Framework of Akatoka's House 254
(Photograph by the Author)

XVIII. Making Preparations for the Night before the Bird Hunt . 272
(Photograph by the Author)

In the Early Morning—Marotse chiefs in the background . 272
(Photograph by the Author)

Captain Hamilton's Arrival 274
(Photograph by the Author)

MAPS

The Middle Zambezi 86
(Photograph by the Author)

The Upper Zambezi Basin, showing the Distribution of Tribes under the Rule of the Paramount Chief of the Marotse . . .
In pocket at end of volume

CHAPTER I

Expedition into MAROTSELAND decided on — The principal objects thereof — Ultimate journey to EGYPT hypothetical — Ways and means — Selection of colleagues — Captain F. C. Quicke — Short sketch of his career — Captain J. Stevenson-Hamilton — Mr. Boyd Alexander — Mr. L. C. Weller — Mr. Theodore Muller — Mr. Ramm — Various methods of transport — Steam launches adopted for river travelling — Their chief characteristics and measurements — Supplies — Ration cases and their contents — Tents — Rifles and ammunition — Expedition entirely equipped in London — Shipped to Durban by the Rennie Aberdeen S.S. *INYONI* — Mr. Sharrer of Sharrer's Zambezi Traffic Company acts as agent in London and Chinde — Participation in the South African war prevents earlier publication of the work of the expedition

AFRICA FROM SOUTH TO NORTH

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THERE is an old saying in South Africa that when once an Englishman has succumbed to the use of Boer tobacco and *veldtschoens* he may return home with the best intentions of remaining, but in doing so he merely deceives himself and unconsciously imposes on the credulity of others—whether he will or not, his return to the veldt is written in the Book of Fate.

And so it was that in the spring of '98, despite my earnest wish to remain in England, I found myself on the eve of a fourth visit to that irregulated continent—the land of contrasts and extremes; of unrestrained freedom and slavery in its crudest shape; where similar conditions brutalise one character but develop and purify another; whose climate too often wrecks the strong, yet not infrequently mends and invigorates the weakly constitution; where vitality and mortality wrestle so fiercely the one with the other that the most prolific increase is neutralised by virulent epidemics and far-reaching plagues.

Marotseland—by which is meant the dominions of Lewanika, king of the Marotse—was once more to be the principal objective of the outgoing expedition.

In '95–'96 I had mapped out southeastern Marotseland, and had endeavoured to arrive at a correct conclusion as to the value and industrial prospects of the country. I now hoped to do the same for the remaining three-quarters of this wide black empire.

Briefly the objects in view were:—

I. To determine the geographical limits of Lewanika's country, with which, in accordance with the Anglo-Portuguese convention of '91, the British boundary in the west is conterminous.

II. To define the Congo-Zambezi watershed, as representing the treaty frontier between the British sphere and this Congo State.

III. To discover the main source of the Zambezi.

IV. To make a hydrographical and ethnographical survey of the whole of Lewanika's territory.

V. To study its resources and industrial possibilities.

VI. To ascertain how far the Zambezi and her affluents could be utilised as navigable waterways.

VII. To furnish the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes with such information bearing on the character of the country as might be of assistance in the selection of a route for the projected trans-continental railway — more especially with reference to the crossing of the Zambezi.

The quite subsidiary intention I formed of returning home *via* the great lakes and the Nile through Egypt — conceived, as it was, as a matter of personal interest rather than with any more serious object — was magnified by the Press until it became to all appearances not only the main but the sole object in view.

It so happened, thanks to the loyal and indomitable support of my colleagues, that circumstances permitted of my proceeding overland to Cairo, after the achievement of the objects enumerated above; but I can assure my readers that I look back on the work of the expedition in Marotseland with infinitely more satisfaction than I can feel for the more imposing, though in point of fact much shorter, lines representing our tracks from south to north and east to west. My view has been, and is, that to turn his somewhat hard and uncertain profession to most profitable account, the latter-day explorer had best select a circumscribed district and work it thoroughly. Five thousand miles within such an area is

immeasurably more valuable than the most imposing line from coast to coast. I quite admit that — outside the limited circle of expert cartographers — this view meets with little or no favour at home, but nevertheless I submit it is sound, for in this way checks and counterchecks can be supplied to the advantage of the survey, and deductions and conclusions are the result of mature and repeated experience, and not the mere guess-work due to first impressions.

Toward the achievement of my objects I received support in the way of grants from various public sources, and these supplied means sufficient to provide for myself and one other — quite an inadequate staff for the work to be done.

Anxious to increase the working capacity of the expedition, I resorted to a scheme calculated, if successful, to supply the want.

After fixing eight white men as a desirable maximum limit, I calculated the bare cost of supplies and carrying power required for each additional member. I was aware that when the plans of the expedition were made public I should be inundated with applications for membership; but quality, not quantity, was wanted. Could eight sound men be found who, while contributing their own bare expenses, would place themselves as unreservedly under my leadership as though they were salaried officials? Only those who know more than can be read of the inner life of some expeditions can fully realise how baneful an influence a single discordant spirit may exert to the detriment of useful work and the prejudice of peace and good-fellowship. It is one thing to appear good-tempered and keen on such objects as ours when surrounded by the comforts and luxuries of civilisation, but quite another to retain those same qualities when difficulties, discouragements, and possibly privation stare one in the face from every corner; it requires men of "grit" to pull together in such circumstances, and it is marvellous how obstacles apparently insurmountable are dissipated by a cheerful determination to ignore them.

In accordance with anticipations every post brought in

applications, not only from my fellow-countrymen, but from the continent. The vast majority had been nowhere, but could do everything. From a minority I made a selection to my entire satisfaction at the time — a satisfaction which the reader, who has the courage to wade through these pages, will agree, was more than justified by results.

There were four contributing members: —

(1) Captain F. C. Quicke, 1st King's Dragoon Guards, of whom it is impossible for me to speak without feelings of the deepest emotion. He was a son of the Reverend C. P. Quicke, rector of Ashbrittle, Somerset, and of Mrs. Quicke, daughter of Mr. Robert Bowne Minturn, an eminent citizen of New York, who rendered invaluable assistance to the British government in their efforts to relieve distress in Ireland in the days of the great famine. He was good at everything, and in the field of sport was quite an exception. In India he broke the record as a pig-sticker, and both in that country and in England held the heavyweight boxing championship. His conscientious energy, self-control, and *real* unselfishness endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. After travelling upward of five thousand miles — more than half of which for survey purposes in Marotseland — he crossed the continent to Benguella, in Portuguese West Africa, where he arrived in a completely broken-down condition. By good fortune Mr. — now Sir George — Bullough, having fitted his yacht as a hospital ship, put in at Benguella *en route* for the Cape a few days after Captain Quicke's arrival. He heard that an Englishman from the interior lay in a dying condition twenty miles from the town. Captain Quicke was taken on board, and, subject to the kind and unremitting attention of the owner of the yacht and his friend, Mr. Mitchell, his life was saved to his country, for a time. After treatment for six weeks in a private hospital at Cape Town, Captain Quicke heard of the projected relief column for Mafeking, and proceeded without delay to Kimberley. Here he was given the command of a squadron of Irregular Light Horse, which formed part of the force destined to



Major J. Stevenson-Hamilton, D.S.O.

raise the siege of the gallant little garrison. He was subsequently recalled home to rejoin his regiment, which was, at the time, at Aldershot, under orders for India. On my return to England at the close of 1900 I was rejoiced to find him in robust health and good spirits. The prolongation of the war now demanded reinforcements, the Indian orders were countermanded, and the K.D.G.'s embarked for the front. The conspicuous thoroughness and pluck shown by Captain Quicke in the field of exploration characterised his services on the field of battle. After performing one of the most gallant of the many brave deeds recorded during the war, he was mentioned in despatches, and subsequently promoted to a Brevet Majority. Six weeks later, on the 26th of October, 1901, he was shot from the window of a farmhouse at four paces, and died with a smile on his face. To say in referring to Captain Quicke's death that he was "widely lamented" is strictly literal; the words may have the ring of a platitude about them, but not so the fact.

(2) Captain J. Stevenson-Hamilton, 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, like Captain Quicke worked *with* me from start to finish, and never *against* me. At the time he reached the East Coast, at the close of the expedition, the war had been in progress for a few months only. He went straight to the front and remained in the fighting line till peace was declared. This, added to the eighteen months of his travels, kept him continuously on the veldt for four and a half years. He also distinguished himself in the field, and has been rewarded with a Brevet Majority and the Distinguished Service Order.

(3) Mr. Boyd Alexander of the Rifle Brigade accompanied the expedition as ornithologist, and made an excellent collection of birds on the Zambezi. While his colleagues were fighting in South Africa he took part in the Ashantee War under Sir James Willcocks.

(4) Mr. C. L. Weller, of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, undertook the duties of engineer. Before matriculating at Cambridge he had served his apprenticeship as a practical

engineer, and, fortunately for the expedition, cut short his 'Varsity career in order to be one of us. His services proved invaluable during our passage up the Zambezi, but to the regret of all, after eight months' useful service, his health rendered his return to England imperative. Under happier circumstances he would have assisted in the work of survey, after the steamers, used for purposes of transport, had been brought to a position convenient for the formation of a supply depôt. Everything he did was thorough.

A practical mineralogist, who had thrown in his lot with us, was at the last moment prevented from leaving England by the exigencies of private affairs. In his place I accepted the services of Mr. Theodore Muller, to whose considerable experience in the management of natives was added an exceptional knowledge of foreign languages. The very soul of energy, always cheerful, never discouraged, Mr. Muller was of the greatest assistance to me during the earlier and, perhaps, most trying stage of the expedition. His knowledge of their language promoted free intercourse with the Portuguese officials on the Lower Zambezi, and in no small degree contributed to the perfect good feeling and friendliness which characterised our mutual relations. Both physically and constitutionally a strong man, in ordinary circumstances his unusual abilities seemed to mark him out for future distinction; but unhappily all the fair promise of an active and useful career was shattered when, falling a victim to dysentery, — that worst of African endemic diseases, — he died at Tete, in December, '98.

To these five gentlemen was added Mr. Ramm, a professional taxidermist, whom Mr. Alexander had enlisted as an assistant.

In organising an expedition for purposes of travel in uncivilised countries, the primary obstacle to be overcome is the transport difficulty. Previously I had experienced the stupidity and perversity of the ox, the ass, and the native porter. Of these the last named can be the more perverse, and, owing to the prevalence of the tsetse fly in the objective country, he alone of the three was available. To move so



Mr. C. L. Weller

large an expedition in this way with the extra goods required to pay and sustain them would demand at least six hundred carriers, to say nothing of "askaris," or native soldiers, to keep order and prevent desertion. Worry, immobility, native opposition, and the food difficulty increase in direct proportion to the number of natives employed. I therefore decided to depart from the usual custom and utilise the waterways which nature had provided.

An order was placed in the hands of Messrs. Forrestt & Sons, the well-known shipbuilders, for the construction of a small flotilla consisting of three boats. They were to be built of aluminium and in sections, the corresponding sections in each to be interchangeable. The hulls were to be constructed on the "Hodgetts principle," which for purposes of river navigation seemed to me to offer important advantages. With the catenarian curves and three modified keels, they should offer a minimum resistance to the water, share with the flat-bottomed boat the advantage of light draught, and at the same time keep so firm a grip on the water as to give even greater effect to the helm than is attained by the usual single-keel boat. Two of the boats were to be fitted with 3-horse-power Mumford engines and have a maximum speed of not less than 6 knots, and each was to be supplied with mast and sail. They were to be constructed as two launches 26 feet long and a barge 22 feet 4 inches long, each with a 6-foot 6-inch beam, all but the first two and last two sections to be identical. Thus by inserting sections amidships in one boat at the expense of the others it would be possible to increase it in length from 26 to 44 feet, or to certain intermediate lengths.

All supplies were purchased in England and packed into portable loads. Ration cases weighing 44 pounds and containing groceries sufficient to last one man for four weeks contained tea, coffee, cocoa, saccharine, oatmeal, dried apple, and apricot, a small quantity of sugar, condensed milk, rice, tapioca, soups, desiccated vegetables, salt, pepper, butter, marmalade, baking powder, and candles. A limited number

of cases was filled with other little luxuries and tinned meat, though we relied almost entirely on our guns and rifles for the latter. Wheaten meal was put into green rot-proof bags each holding 50 pounds. Ridge-pole tents with 3-foot 6-inch walls weighing about 45 pounds were also made of light rot-proof canvas. Each member provided himself with a Rigby sporting Mauser, so that, for one rifle apiece at least, ammunition would be interchangeable; for the other the 500 Express was the popular weapon, though a favourite old 16-bore, taking either spherical or conical bullets, took the place of an Express in my armoury. With the exception of Mr. Alexander, who for his purpose preferred the ordinary smooth-bore gun, we took 12-bore Paradoxes for the pursuit of feathered game.

All the goods and the boats were shipped in London by the Rennie Aberdeen Liner *Inyone* — the whole of the personnel of the expedition, with the exception of Captain Hamilton, travelling by the same boat. Mr. Sharrer, of "Sharrer's Zambezi Traffic Co.," acted as my agent, and from the company, of which he is managing director, I chartered the stern-wheeler *Centipede* to take us bag and baggage to the foot of the Kebrabasa Rapids. In this way I hoped to gain time and avoid the necessity of constructing the steamers until beyond Kebrabasa and the pale of civilisation.

I feel I owe a word of explanation in view of the fact that over two years have intervened between the termination of the expedition and the publication of its history. The war was still in progress at the time the results of the expedition had been worked out and placed in the hands of those especially interested. I deemed it my duty to offer my services. They were accepted — hence the delay.



The Late Mr. Theodore Muller

CHAPTER II

Goods trans-shipped to river steamer *Centipede* at Chinde — First trial of *Constance* in African waters — *Centipede* casts her moorings on July 18, 1898 — Emerge from mists of delta into dry clearness of interior — Scarcity of native labour — Pessimistic prediction of Portuguese commandant at Chinde — Shallows of the Lower Zambezi — Characteristic scenery thereof — Wave of enterprise in South Africa — Mount MORAMBALA and the SHIRÉ River — SHUPANGA — The old GOANESE house and Mrs. Livingstone's grave — Father Torrend and his mission — A GOANESE official refuses to sanction employment of boys — *Centipede* in difficulty — Dinner at SENNA with Senhor PINTO BASTO — A talk on colonisation — Tom the PONDO falls overboard — His "brother" Charles swims to rescue — Sandbanks again — The *Constance* under sail — Captain Hamilton and his dog in a game-pit — Digest of further journey to TETE — Arrival of Mr. Muller — He offers his services — Difficulty in way of acceptance — He accompanies us to TETE — An expert linguist — Slow progress — The Lupata Gorge — Goose *versus* fish-eagle — TETE reached on 9th August — Portuguese courtesy — Major Robertson of "Robertson's Cape Boys" — Departure from TETE — BAROMA, a Jesuit station — The *Centipede's* destination — Goods conveyed by barge to MESENANGWE — Formation of base camp — The river's volume — An apparent anomaly — Mr. Ross returns to Chinde — His services and energy

CHAPTER II

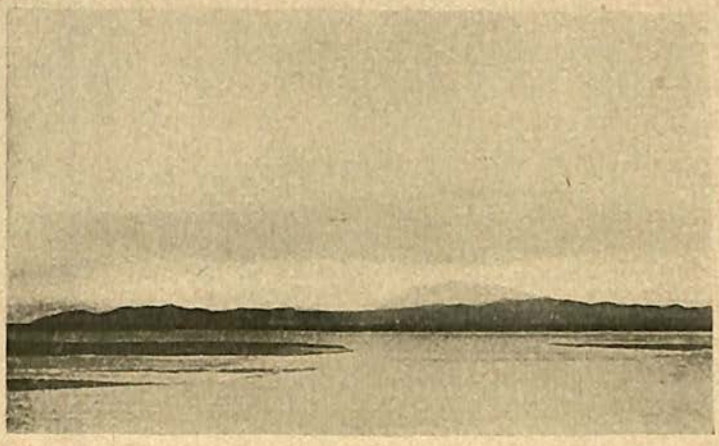
UP THE ZAMBEZI RIVER

As the expedition had been fully equipped in England with supplies calculated to feed and transport its personnel for eighteen months, and as these goods had been carefully packed into portable cases, the work at Chinde began and ended with their trans-shipment from the steamship *Matabele*, which had brought us from Durban, to the river barge in which they would be conveyed to the foot of the Kebrabasa Rapids. While this was in progress we assisted Mr. Weller in constructing one of the launches, and made our first trial in African waters. On July 18, '98 — the second day after our arrival — the stern-wheeler *Centipede* cast her moorings, and we steamed steadily eastward up the one narrow navigable outlet of the great river which we were destined to trace to the spot where its first waters ooze from a boggy spring two thousand miles away — more than thrice the distance of our island home as measured from John o' Groat's to Land's End. Four native "engineers," who had been trained on board one river steamer or another, were engaged to assist Mr. Weller in his work. As Mr. Ross, the commander of the *Centipede*, gave the order to let go the gangway, two of these worthies thought better of their engagement, leapt ashore, and made off as fast as their legs could carry them. That evening a cold drenching rain fell, to be followed in the early morning by a damp hanging mist; but as we steamed from the delta to the broad shallow bed of the main river, we exchanged the uncertain weather of the coast for the glorious climate of the African winter — bright, but not too hot, in the daytime; clear and cold, but not too cold, at night.

That day the remaining two native "engineers" left us, and

the native servant difficulty loomed large in front of us. One boy engaged at Chinde and four we had brought from Durban represented the sum total of the native department. The Portuguese commandant at Chinde had given it as his opinion that we should have no difficulty in "engaging" a few boys during our passage to Tete, but that they would all leave us before we entered country outside their knowledge. We were now passing the Shiré-Zambezi confluence. The bed of the river is a great width. Innumerable shallow shifting channels take their circuitous course between countless sand-banks — a vast expanse of golden yellow streaked with silver and stretching for some three to five miles from one low reed-skirt bank to the other. The *Centipede* drew but twenty-eight inches, and yet it was with difficulty that she found a sufficiency of water to float her. In fact, the Lower Zambezi, in spite of the hundreds of thousands of miles from which the river draws her waters, can scarcely be called a navigable waterway during the latter months of the dry season. At this time of the year—if we except the Lupata Gorge, which for thirty-five miles compresses the river between narrow mountainous banks — the last 350 miles of the Zambezi are disappointing in every respect. They are only striking when considered in the light of prospective possibilities (Appendix, Chapter I). Possibly the day is not far distant when the wave of enterprise, which during the last thirteen years has so stubbornly and effectively reclaimed to civilisation the dark recesses of Mashonaland and Matabeleland and has already obtained a substantial footing in Marotseland, will make itself felt here also; but the master hand is no longer with us, and we wait to see if there is a head strong enough and clear enough to take his place before we venture to assume the dangerous rôle of the prophet.

In passing through this sandy labyrinth, the exact whereabouts of the Shiré confluence is largely a matter for conjecture. Mount Morambala, the one landmark rising above the flat monotonous plain, was in view for three or four days. This mountain stands in the western angle formed by the



The Zambezi Near the Shire Confluence



Native Canoes on the Lower Zambezi

two great rivers, which offer such exceptional, but only partially appreciated, facilities to those who would carry enterprise and civilisation into the very heart of the continent.

On the second day we tied at Shupanga, where two cool, thick-walled houses, still in perfect repair, remind one of the Goanese settlement on the Zambezi two hundred years past. It was in one of these that Mrs. Livingstone breathed her last some thirty years ago. She was buried close by, under a great baobab tree, which fell to the ground a few years back, and in its fall broke the stone which marked the grave. Since then a second stone has been erected and is carefully tended by the Jesuits who at present occupy the houses.

Father Torrend, the eminent African linguist, who presided over this mission, directed me to a village where he said he imagined I should experience no difficulty in engaging natives for the expedition. Early the next morning I repaired thither with Mr. Ross, who spoke the local tongue fluently. After consultation the headman informed us that a few of his boys were willing to enter my service, but that he dared not give them his permission until sanction had been obtained from some one or other whom he located by pointing his finger in a certain direction. At our request he led us to this dignitary. We hammered at the door of a small tumble-down hovel for a long time without effect, but still we continued; for the headman insisted that the object of our search was within. At length our importunity was rewarded with success—at least so far as the object of our search was concerned. The door opened, and a not very clean, emaciated, under-sized Goanese disclosed himself and the dingy, dirty den he haunted. Such was the official from whom permission to engage boys had to be obtained. Whether he was not invested with discretionary powers or whether he possessed powers which could be set in motion only by the application of "backsheesh" I failed to gather—the net result was the same, and the boys could not be engaged. We returned to the steamer and prepared to proceed.

However, we did not travel far that day, for the *Centi-*

pede ran on a sandbank, and there we remained all the day listening to the throbbing engines and the dull drumming of the wheel on the water. The boys dug and towed; the engines reversed with helm hard over, now to port, now to starboard; we wriggled from right to left and left to right; but the bows remained fixed as on a pivot. In the afternoon we got up steam on the *Constance* and made a little trip upstream, and on our return the *Centipede* was still fixed as in a vice. We fed, smoked, discussed the situation, and slept.

It was not until noon on the ensuing day that we floated. Wood was taken on board at Munterara, a Portuguese station on the left bank, and two hours later we tied at Senna, the headquarters station of the district. Mr. Ross accompanied me to the house of Senhor A. C. F. Pinto Basto, district commandant and ex-naval officer. It was Senhor Pinto Basto who took so prominent a part in the futile attempt to prevent the British gunboat *Herald* ascending the river, in accordance with the provisions of the treaty which constitutes the Zambezi an international waterway. We were most cordially received. Tall, fair, and of undoubted intellectual attainment, Senhor Pinto Basto impressed me as one of the most congenial personalities of the many officers and civilians of all nations with whom I had the pleasure of a passing acquaintance during the experiences I relate. He insisted on our remaining to dinner, and since he spoke excellent English, we talked long on many topics of mutual interest over a glass of the best wine of Portugal. One stage of our conversation seems to me worthy of recording here.

"How," I asked, "are these colonies progressing?"

"We cannot make any headway," he replied. "We feel our position here to be most unsatisfactory. We feel we are merely a stop-gap for you English."

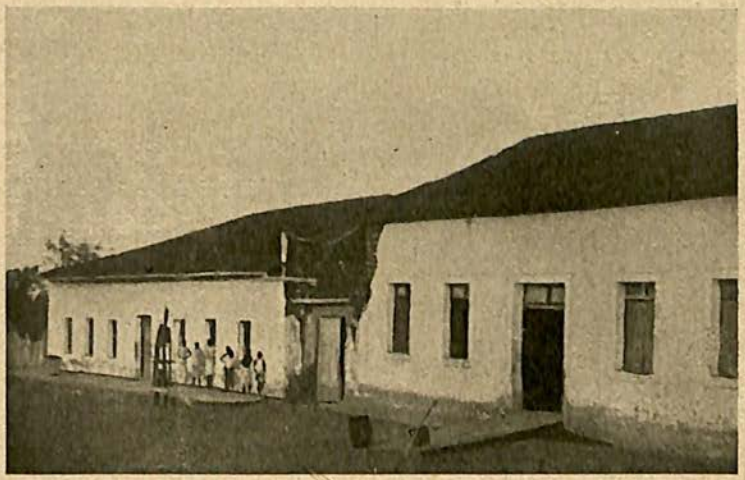
"How so?" I inquired.

"Nothing can prevent these possessions falling into your hands."

"But," I said, "speaking as an average Englishman who



Mrs. Livingstone's Tombstone



The House at Shupanga in which Mrs. Livingstone Died

takes a keen interest in our colonial empire, I feel sure that neither our statesmen nor the majority of thinking Englishmen have any wish to deprive you of your possessions, provided always you don't touch our pockets by handicapping the lines of communication through your territory to ours with disproportionate imposts and other difficulties. Allow us to communicate freely with our possessions, and I do not believe for a moment that we will covet yours. All we wish is to be able to make the most of our own."

"Ah, I believe you — speaking as you do from the point of view of the present. But what about twenty-five or say forty years hence? The laws of nature must assert themselves. You are a great and growing nation, full of vigour, with an enterprising and rapidly growing population, besides which you have wealth at your back. We are but a small nation. We are poor, and our population does not increase. What can we do? We must recede, and you must expand whether you will or not."

The next day Tom, one of three Pondos engaged at Durban, fell overboard, and was lucky to escape a blow from the wheel. Unable to swim, he was for a few moments in a perilous position, but while some of us let go the *Constance*, and paddled to the rescue, Charles — one of his companions, whose aquatic accomplishments were not of a high order — very pluckily swam to his "brother's" rescue. By the time we reached the two boys they were quite exhausted. Tom either swooned or pretended to swoon, until placed on board the *Centipede*, where he lay beneath a blanket for the rest of the day.

Toward evening we were once more wedged on a sandbank, and as on the following morning there was no prospect of getting clear for a few hours, we made a short cruise in the *Constance*. As a fresh breeze was blowing, her sail was set for the first time, the result being entirely successful. Owing to the powerful grip her three keels had on the water, she sailed remarkably close to the wind and at the same time heeled over so slightly as in no way to interfere with the

action of the engines. From midday till late in the afternoon the *Centipede* was once more in motion, winding her way through the labyrinth of sandy shallows. Once more a fixture, she thrashed the water and throbbed in every timber until 3 P.M. the ensuing afternoon. As there was evidence of game in the neighbourhood, Mr. Weller and myself took our rifles for a walk, and Captain Hamilton went off in an independent direction with his "great Dane," Sultan.

We saw no game, but the game-pits dug by the natives caused some little diversion. These pits are frequently so cleverly obscured that a practised eye alone relieves the wanderer of the necessity of taking a headlong dive into the bowels of the earth. From such discomfiture I had been just in time to save Mr. Weller, and half an hour later the shouts of Captain Hamilton in the distance seemed to indicate that something had gone wrong. On hurrying to the scene, the nature of the trouble became obvious. Both dog and man had walked unwarily into one of these traps — which was an unusually deep one — and fallen to the bottom, but with no further inconvenience than a good shaking. With considerable difficulty Hamilton had scaled the ten feet of earthen wall which confined him, but Sultan was still hopelessly imprisoned, and to extricate him was more than a "one man job."

These game-pits have not infrequently been the cause of serious mishaps — especially in the old days in South Africa, when horses have been impaled by the pointed stakes arranged to transfix game. Luckily there were no stakes in the pit in question, but less provocation than that, supplied by a ten feet drop, has been known to break a neck.

I will spare the reader a detailed account of our passage to Tete. There was little more to record than the getting on to sandbanks and getting off them again. The following extract from my diary supplies an outline of the worries of navigating this broad, shallow section of the Zambezi at low river — imagination will supply the rest:—

"28th July. Got off early and did good day's work.

". . . Later went aground and had a bad time of it, but did a little later on.

"29th. Aground again nearly all day.

"30th. Got off about 4 P.M.

"31st. Went aground 3 times . . . and wasted whole day getting off.

"1st Aug. Got clear at about 9 A.M. but after going a few miles went aground again."

And so things went on throughout the passage. We shot several crocodiles, smoked a great many pipes, and took twenty-two instead of six days to reach Tete. Thus the number of days and hours spent on sandbanks can easily be calculated.

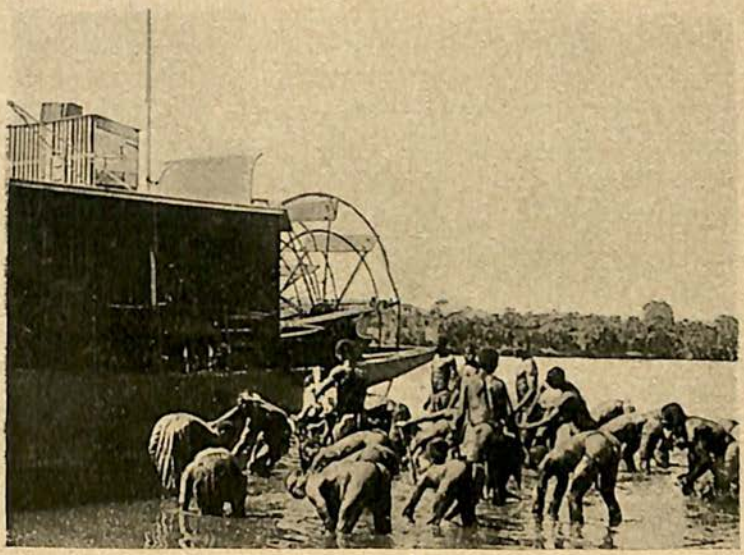
On the first of August we were approached by a boat manned by some ten native paddlers. A white man hailed us and inquired for me. A moment later a smart-looking man about thirty years of age stepped on board. He wasted no time either in movement or diction, but spoke straight to the point.

"My name is Muller. I am much interested in your plans and have come across country from Salisbury in the hope of intercepting you. Will you accept my services? I am not a scientist, nor do I know anything of surveying, but I have no doubt I can make myself useful." I explained that I regretted that the steamers were even now scarcely equal to the weight they would have to carry, and that I had already refused several applicants on the ground that the personnel of the expedition was complete. I was very favourably impressed by the manly straightforwardness of the stranger, besides which it was quite refreshing to receive an application from a man who did not describe himself as capable of doing anything and everything and gifted with an excessive omniscience usually denied to mortal man. Probably ninety *per cent.* of the numerous applicants for employment which reached me from home and abroad were thus supernaturally endowed. Of the few

who took a less extravagant view of their virtues there were one or two of whose services I should have been glad to avail myself had the means at my disposal allowed me to do so.

It appeared that Mr. Muller had struck the Zambezi at Tete, where, finding that the expedition had not yet passed, he hired a Portuguese boat and came downstream to meet us. I also gathered that he had made the journey from Salisbury with about half a dozen donkeys, with the express desire to join the expedition, failing which he purposed to ascend the Shiré into Nyasaland, with a view to studying the resources of the country and contributing articles and information for the use of a certain newspaper. On learning that Mr. Muller was returning to Tete in either case, I gladly offered him a passage with the proviso that he would loan the services of his crew to Mr. Ross during the countless emergencies such as had and no doubt would occur. That evening we tied — or rather in this case were stuck — on a sandbank at Ankoasi, a small station on the left bank of the river. Here we found Senhor Pia, a Portuguese official from Tete, who with his wife and daughter — a bright young lady of some seventeen summers — was *en route* for Lisbon on leave of absence. Mr. Muller, who was already acquainted with Senhor Pia and his family, and myself spent a very pleasant evening with them. My new friend on this occasion demonstrated one of the many qualities and accomplishments which he had not pleaded in his favour, but which were only brought to light by dint of close contact. He spoke Portuguese with ease and fluency. A Swiss by birth, he ultimately informed me that he had spent some years in England and had been in Rhodesia since '96. He spoke English like an Englishman, and in addition to speaking Portuguese, he was an expert linguist in German, French, Italian, and Spanish. What appealed to me still more was the fact that he thought and acted like an Englishman.

In train of thought and general sentiment Europe seems



Digging Out the "Centipede"



The Pilot

to be divided into two distinct categories. Generally speaking, the Swiss, the Scandinavians, and, to a less extent, the Germans — and, of course, the Americans — have much in common with ourselves and are easily assimilated to our methods; but with few exceptions other races, in spite of their acknowledged courtesy, hospitality, and "*bonhomie*," which characterise them in their dealings with strangers, are separated from us by a definite barrier of feeling. They do not understand us nor we them, nor can it be otherwise until Europe becomes more cosmopolitan — a very questionable means to a desirable end.

Four days later, after slow progress and no inconsiderable experience of sandbanks, we paid a passing visit to Inyakuru, a Portuguese station standing at the top of a steep conical hill, and entered the Lupata Gorge. The river had been gradually improving, but now we found ourselves for the first time in one of those grand mountainous stretches which do so much to beautify the middle Zambezi. Here it flows in a deep, strong stream between high banks rising to hills on either side. These hills are covered with vegetation of the acacia and mopani classes while at their base grows a fringe of dark, heavily leaved trees except where the action of the floods has left yellow cliffs rising abruptly from the water's edge. The gorge is under forty miles in length, and is the only piece of striking scenery on the lower river; that is, between Kebrabasa and the sea.

On the following day we witnessed a very pretty scene in nature. I was on the point of firing on a couple of Egyptian geese which swam across the bows of the steamer, but on noticing that they escorted a brood of unfledged goslings I refrained from the deed of blood. The little family were within twenty yards of the bank, when a fish-eagle swooped down from above, creating a loud whirring sound in the rapidity of his flight. The designs of the white-headed eagle were on the goslings, but these were frustrated by the action of one of the parent birds, which rushed at the aggressor with

all the noisy commotion of which the goose is capable. For a moment a conflict took place in the air, the monster bird gradually retreating before the desperate onslaught of his smaller and weaker opponent. In vain did the goose try to strike the eagle with his wing, but the latter adroitly avoided each blow until, on coming to the conclusion that the case was worthy of discretion, he went off in quest of other game, and the brood was safely escorted to cover on the bank.

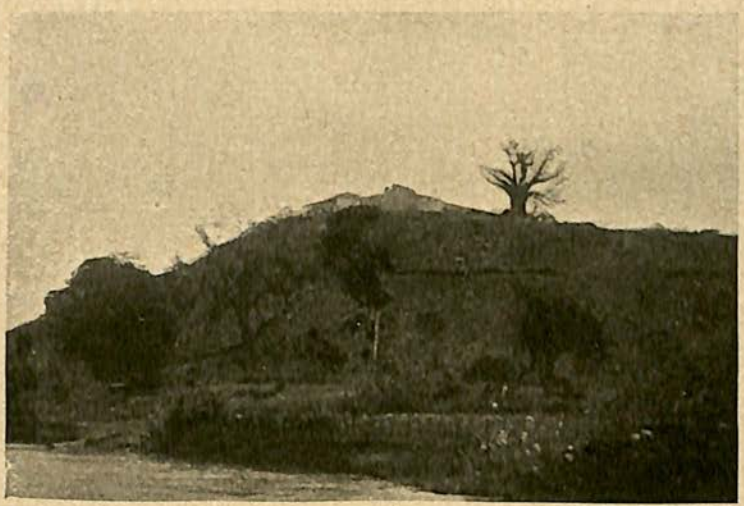
Tete was reached on the 9th of August. We were courteously received by the Portuguese commandant and were told that arrangements were being made to do us honour, but as every day was of importance if we were to reach Marotseland before the rains commenced, I deemed it advisable to move on the following day.

Senhor Martins, the principal agent of the "Companha da Zambezia," a most energetic man with a remarkable influence over the natives, acceded at once to my request to supply three hundred porters for the carriage of steamers and goods from below the Kebrabasa Rapids to the navigable river above — a distance of sixty-five miles. He also gave me a most courteously worded letter to all the agents under him from Tete to Zumbo, who would — he assured me — do everything I might desire. I further had the gratification of learning that his Excellency the Governor-General at Quilimane had instructed all his commandants to do everything in their power to further the interests of the expedition during its passage through Portuguese territory, and it is with grateful pleasure that I state that his Excellency's instructions were well carried out both in letter and in spirit by every officer with whom we had the pleasure of coming in contact.

In the evening we were entertained at dinner by Major Robertson, late of the 1st Royal Dragoons, the gallant commander of "Robertson's Cape Boys," who did such yeoman service in the second Matabele campaign. By eleven o'clock next morning, the *Centipede* was once more under steam, and we set off to negotiate the last few remaining



Upper Entrance to the Lupata Gorge



Inyakuru—Portuguese Station

miles which lay between us and the commencement of our labours.

The river rapidly narrows here; and although in places navigation is rendered somewhat risky by hidden rocks, there is considerable depth of water and the banks are high. In the afternoon we tied at Baroma, a Jesuit mission station, the buildings of which testify to the energy and resource of these missionaries. When I say that the dwelling-house is a mansion and the church a small cathedral, I do not speak in comparative terms. The two buildings overlook the river from wooded heights some seventy feet above its level. The house contains two floors, with high spacious rooms and airy staircase and corridors. From the promenade on the flat roof, which is upward of one hundred feet in length, a magnificent view is obtained of the river below and the country beyond. Near it the chastely designed church towers above the surrounding trees, and stands a conspicuous monument to the principles it represents. In the back premises are the work-shops from which the buildings have been evolved, each craft being under the superintendence of a brother of the Order, — a carpenter's shop, a smithy, a brickfield, and so forth, and many of the native protégés are quite expert at their trade. What strikes the visitor most — especially him who has seen much of natives both in and out of mission stations — is the fact that the workers, though African, move about briskly and intelligently, and not in the sleepy, careless manner so characteristic of the race. Surely this is the system on which all missions should be managed — discipline and useful labour. This apprenticeship to temporal duties does not preclude the "fathers" from instructing their flock in reading, writing, arithmetic, and things spiritual. Useful occupation combines with book-lore to make up the sum of intelligence and productive resource.

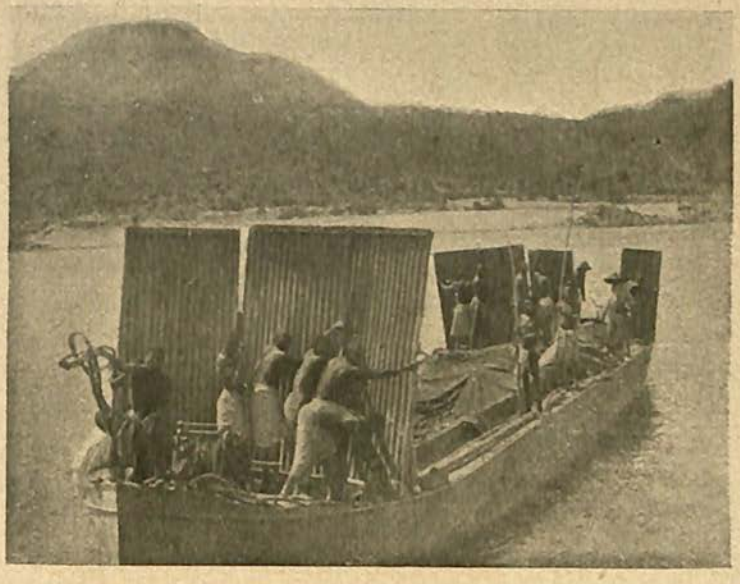
Early next morning — before our reverend friends were about — we cast our moorings and proceeded upstream. One of the boys, who was absent at the start, caught us up later, and handed in a card bearing the father's compliments

and regrets that he had not been down in time to see us off. A present of a fat goat had been sent after us; but since we concluded that the boy, on failing to sight us, would have returned to Baroma, it was not deemed advisable to delay.

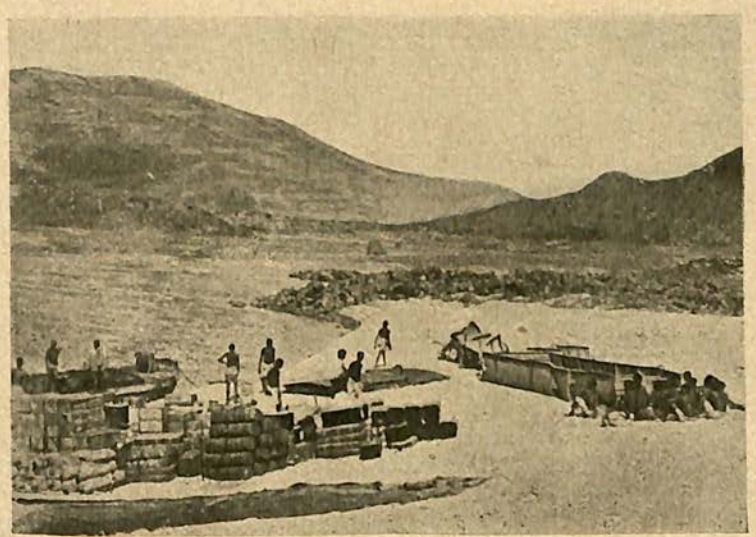
At noon we reached the furthermost point to which Mr. Ross considered it safe to take the *Centipede*. The river had narrowed to something less than one hundred yards, was lined by steep, stony banks, and here and there ominous-looking rocks rose above the surface of the water.

With a view to shortening the prospective land journey by a few miles, all the expeditionary effects were put on the *Centipede's* barge, and Mr. Weller prepared the *Constance* for a start. The steamer boys, and the majority of some twelve I had succeeded in engaging, were armed with poles and a tow rope, and sent off in the barge under Captain Quicke and Mr. Muller, while the rest of us travelled in the *Constance*. Mr. Muller had insisted on seeing the expedition start on its own resources, and proposed accompanying us to Chicoa, which stands at the western extremity of the Rapids. During twelve days' close intercourse I had every opportunity of noting his character, and had arrived at the conclusion that he possessed in a high degree those qualities most essential to members of such an expedition as ours. He was active in mind and body, of sound practical sense, full of resource, a thorough gentleman, and good tempered. Since he had definitely decided to proceed to Nyasaland, I accepted him as a member of the expedition, conditionally on his joining us in the neighbourhood of Lake Mweru with a couple of dozen fresh boys. We should by that time have consumed a large proportion of the supplies, and there would be ample accommodation for him and his personal effects.

That night we did not find a suitable landing-place till the sun was already below the horizon, the barge being some way behind. Long after dark a round was fired from a distance of about half a mile, but so impassable was the intervening country that we failed to communicate with one another. By sunrise they arrived, and after breakfasting together we con-



How the Barge Sailed to the Foot of the Rapids



Expeditionary Effects on the Sands at Mesenangwe

tinued our course upstream, and in an hour the *Constance* was at the entrance of the narrow, rocky gorge through the walls of which the Zambezi rushes in a surging torrent. A circular basin surrounded by broken hills and intersected by the river marks this spot. Here also a winding sand river, known as the Mesenangwe, enters the parent stream from the southwest. At this season there is no sign of surface water in its dried bed — it is a typical South African river. Shortly after our arrival, the barge hove in sight "under full sail." A fresh breeze from the east had sprung up at a time when the rough banks and great depth of water had combined to render both rope and poles useless, but Mr. Muller's inventive brain came to the rescue. The hatches of corrugated iron were placed vertically on the deck and supported by the boys. These held the wind, and the great tub made quite respectable headway against the stream.

We found an excellent camping-ground on a small level space forty feet above the Zambezi, and it was here that we pitched our tents until such time as we should see the last load on the road to Chicoa.

Now that the river was confined between narrow, definite banks, we had an opportunity of forming a general estimate of its volume. I had travelled the Upper Zambezi, one thousand miles upstream, at the same time of year in '95, and was forced to the conclusion that the volume of water during the last three months of the dry season is considerably in excess of that passing Kebrabasa. On first consideration this would appear strange, but when it is considered, firstly, that the Kafukwe is the sole affluent between the Victoria Falls and the Shiré, supplying more than a mere dribblet of water, while the majority run quite dry in the winter months, and secondly, that in so thirsty a country as Africa evaporation and soakage must be very considerable, this fact is more easily comprehended.

Mr. Ross, with the barge, left us the next day, and thus our connection with the *Centipede* ended. Mr. Ross had played a

difficult and anxious part. Eager to get us to our destination without delay, not only in the interests of his employers, but also for our sakes, he had daily shared with us the mortification bred by spent labours and tediously slow progress. His energy on these occasions never flagged, and he did all that human being could do under very trying circumstances.

CHAPTER III

MESENANGWE reached on Aug. 13 — Difficulty in procuring adequate number of boys — Terms of engagement — Readjustment of loads — A parley with the boys — Visit from BAROMA — Attempt to transport boilers on trolley — Unsuccessful — One hundred porters arrive from CHICOA — They leave in Mr. Muller's charge — Flying visit to CHICOA — SENHOR IGNATIO DE JESUS XAVIER — A doubtful reputation — With Livingstone in '58 — A coincidence — Mr. Alexander reaches CHICOA — Return to MESENANGWE — Mr. Hepburn and his ill-fated companion — The latest news from Europe — Arrival of last batch of goods — More boys engaged — Two traders and how they frustrated their own ends — The launch of the *Constance* — The greetings of the commandant of KASHOMBE — Discouragements at outset — Overladen boats — Slow progress — The bursting of a tube — New plans — Loyal companions — Expedition to be divided — Three for Marotseland, the remainder for the KAFUKWE River — Mr. Muller becomes a member of the expedition — One launch with two engines for the Victoria Falls — Successful trial — Senhor Ignatio and his tribute of friendship

CHAPTER III

ARRIVAL AT MESENANGWE

THE day of our arrival at Mesenangwe — the 13th of August — was devoted to the work of clearing the camp and surrounding it with a fence of thorns, leaving only a single entrance for communication from without. Beyond this entrance was a second and smaller *scherm* which was set apart for the boys, and through which strangers must pass before entering the precincts of our private quarters.

In the matter of boys we were much understaffed. We required about thirty. I had during our passage from Chinde engaged quite sixty; but of these only eight remained, the majority having deserted the moment they had attained the real object for which they joined, — two or three good round meals, or a free passage to some distant village, to visit which opportunity bred the inclination. Thus, including our four South African servants, we had but twelve boys, eight of whom might disappear any night; but I still had hopes of being able to secure others at Chicoa. To each boy I put a series of questions on engagement so as to allow of no unintentional misconception of what was required of him. In the matter of remuneration I have always made it a rule to promise the lowest rate of pay current in the locality to which the boy belongs, giving him to understand that he will be paid on a higher scale or not, in proportion to his merits. Our Portuguese friends had, to a man, expressed their regret that we should have relied on the river boys to man the expedition, — saying: "They desert even us before they have been taken any great distance from their homes, although they know that almost certain chastisement awaits them in the future."

When once comfortably established in camp, the work of readjusting the loads into sixty-pound packages, supplemented by a series of observations for longitude and latitude, kept us fully occupied for some days.

Meantime the boys had much leisure to talk and to sleep, with the usual result that they became suspicious of the future and unsettled in their minds. A deputation waited on me, asking what I intended to do, where I proposed taking them, when would they be returned to their homes, and so forth. "Have I not told each one of you," I answered, "exactly for what purpose you were engaged? Am I not an Englishman? Do Englishmen lie?" And once more I told them that they were to accompany us till the journey ended, which might be in one year or might be in two; that if we did not return the way we went, but reached the coast at some other point, I should send them to the Zambezi by sea; that in the meantime they would work for me, and I would look after them and feed them. In the end those who had behaved well would return home happy, for they would have their accumulated pay and a good present in addition, but those who gave trouble would have their pay only. This put most of them in better heart, but two grumblers still remained. I stood ten paces away and addressed them. "Those of you who are not women and are not afraid to go where I am not afraid to go, come and stand behind me. Let the others remain where they are. They shall go home. I do not want women and children with me."

The majority immediately lined up behind me, but the two grumblers hesitated. Then feeling themselves in the minority, they, too, followed the example of their companions.

"Now then," I said, "behave properly and do your best, and you will find that you have a good master." And so the incident ended. One of the grumblers deserted that night; the other remained with us for five months, when he, with three boys engaged later, likewise disappeared; but all the rest finished their engagement and returned to their homes to boast of their achievements and to squander their earnings.

One day a boat paddled by natives, with a white man in the stern sheets, was seen slowly approaching the camp. The visitor proved to be one of the "brothers" from Baroma. He had come to pay us a visit, and brought with him a fat sheep and a goat, with the best wishes and compliments of the Father Superior — an act of courtesy we thoroughly appreciated. Our guest spent the evening with us and returned the next day.

A few hours later a neighbouring chief put in an appearance, and with him I arranged for the hire of thirty boys. We had brought with us a trolly — a miniature "buckwagon" — which could be taken to pieces and placed in the boats when not required for land transport. This, I conceived, would be useful for the transport of the boilers along the banks when rapids compelled us to leave the river. When loaded up with the two boilers, tool boxes, and one or two heavy pieces, the trolly weighed one and a half tons, and an attempt was made to tow it over the country between our camp and a cleared road supposed to be twelve miles away, which led to Chicoa. The attempt ended in failure, owing to the abnormal difficulties of the route. First it was hauled for half a mile along the soft sandy bed of the Mesenangwe, then up seventy feet of bank at an angle of forty-five degrees, and, finally, for some seven or eight miles along a path we cut through the bush. It was dragged through rocky torrent beds and up steep inclines for three days, at the end of which the boys "struck," and no one marvelled. On examining the country beyond, I decided to abandon the attempt; but as the experience had shown that the trolly might be very useful in many cases, I was not inclined to leave it behind, so arranged to take it to pieces and carry it to Chicoa. Mr. Weller camped by the trolly, while Captain Hamilton with sixteen boys undertook the removal of one of the boilers, which weighed about seven hundred pounds. Twenty-one miles from the main camp these boys, in their turn, considered the time had come to strike. They departed, and Hamilton with his servants settled down to a quiet life until such time as a

fresh team of porters could be sent him. In the meantime Senhor Martins's agent, a "black Portuguese," put in an appearance with the first detachment of porters, forty in number. When they saw the sample of calico Senhor Martins had sent as payment, they refused to carry for the amount stipulated, and as to the musty meal he had provided as food, they said they preferred none at all, as it was far "past eating." I must say I quite appreciated the boys' objections in both instances. Both articles were just as bad as they well could be. By arrangement they undertook either to carry for eight instead of six yards of Senhor Martins's calico, or for the latter amount of the expeditionary stuff. I preferred to use up the inferior article first and draw on our own goods when compelled to do so. It soon turned out that 300 porters were quite inadequate, as the steamer sections were seriously over the stipulated weight. Instead of scaling a maximum weight of 120 pounds, they ran to 175 and some to 195 pounds. This was a serious matter if the boats were to be transported by land ten or a dozen times, for the sections required 100 boys instead of half that number, and this irrespective of boilers, engines, tools, etc., which absorbed another 50. All together, instead of 300 porters, 467 had to be engaged. Thus, including the 75 out of the 300 left unpaid owing to the inferiority of Senhor Martins's calico, the pay of 242 porters was thrown on the resources of the expedition. This absorbed 1452 yards, which could be ill spared.

On the 24th of August one hundred porters left under Mr. Muller's charge. The next day I met Mr. Weller and proceeded with him to Captain Hamilton's camp. As the road thither was so appallingly rough and mountainous, it seemed obvious that the effects at the two camps must be carried to Chicoa independently, so I decided to hurry on to that place myself and make the necessary arrangements. After taking a light meal with Captain Hamilton, I continued the journey and slept on the Tete-Chicoa road, which proved to be about twenty-eight miles from Mesenangwe camp



Towing the Trolly up the Bed of the Mesenangwe River



Carrying the Boilers to Chicoa

instead of twelve. Starting at sunrise next morning, I marched till 7.30 P.M., making two short halts and covering in all thirty-nine miles. By three o'clock the following afternoon I had marched another twenty-eight miles and arrived at a village called Nyakoprire, where I found Mr. Muller and his party.

At 1.30 next day we arrived at our destination, and were greeted by a tall, slight, "half-caste" Portuguese with a skin of the darkest shade of black. He styled himself Senhor Ignatio de Jesus Xavier, and he was an honorary lieutenant-colonel in the Portuguese army. The Portuguese colony is divided, for purposes of revenue, into districts known as "prazos," which are rated at a specified value as representing the sum to be placed annually to the credit of the administration. The "prazo" is put up to auction periodically and knocked down to the highest bidder, who farms the taxes and squeezes as much more out of the native population as extortion and ingenuity will allow. Senhor Ignatio farms the Chicoa district; the Jesuits at Baroma preside over the contiguous one. I met one prolific old Portuguese gentleman who boasted that in addition to one white daughter, over 140 black boys and girls owed their origin to him. He found it necessary that some half dozen prazos should contribute toward the expense of his profligacy. Is it a matter of wonder that Portuguese colonies do not prosper under this old-world system?

Of Senhor Ignatio we had not been led to expect much, and in fact had been strongly warned to be on the *qui vive* in any matter of business between him and ourselves. However, he began well by placing at our disposal a spacious, cool room in his well-built, thick-walled house, the windows of which overlooked the river from a height of forty feet above its level.

By the time we had rested and swallowed a meal — and after tramping 110 miles in three and a half days I confess I appreciated the opportunity to be lazy — our host came in to talk business. He went straight to the point: "What am I going to make out of this transaction?"

"I suppose," I answered, "as agent of the Companha da Zambezia, Senhor Martins has arranged all that. He tells me you are the Company's agent here."

"So I am, but Martins keeps all commissions for himself."

Not accepting this statement as strictly accurate, I replied: "That is very unfair to you. I will write to Senhor Martins, and if I find he does not propose to remunerate you for your trouble, I will see that you do not go unrewarded for any services you may render me."

Ultimately Mr. Muller and I agreed that a small commission might not prove a bad investment.

"If you will do all you can to provide carriers without delay, I for my part will be glad to give you a commission, on each porter supplied, of 75 reis." (Nominal value 4 pence, though at the then rate of exchange little more than $2\frac{1}{2}$d.)

He accepted the offer without demur and seemed quite satisfied.

Calico was sent out that afternoon and Senhor Ignatio informed us that he hoped to parade the boys in six days.

Business settled, conversation took a more interesting turn. It transpired that our new coloured friend was with Livingstone on the *Ma-Robert*, when the doctor fought the Kebrabasa Rapids in '58. He insisted that he took a special interest in our expedition. "For," said he, "forty years ago I helped to navigate the first steamer to reach Kebrabasa from the sea, and now I am helping to start the first steamer from Kebrabasa onwards."

In this connection I feel loth to omit recording a coincidence which in spite of its personal nature is — as a coincidence — somewhat striking.

Livingstone's boat, the *Ma-Robert*, was, as Senhor Ignatio stated, the first steamer to navigate the Lower Zambezi. She steamed as far as these Kebrabasa Rapids, where, after repeated gallant attempts to go yet farther, the doctor was eventually compelled to abandon his plans. "On the 9th of November, 1858," writes the great explorer, "we reached

the Kebrabasa Rapids." Thus the *Ma-Robert* reached her goal on the same day on which the humble owner of the *Constance*, which was destined to continue her work as a pioneer steamer, first saw the light of day.

After waiting three or four days Mr. Alexander, with his taxidermist Mr. Ramm, marched in with twenty loads, and shortly afterward a letter reached me from Captain Hamilton saying that he was on the move. The same evening Mr. Muller and myself started off by moonlight. He was to take carriers to bring on the trolly, and goods with it, while I took orders from Senhor Ignatio to the Chief Barura, at the half-way village, instructing him to supply porters to bring in the remaining loads from the main camp. At 5 o'clock next evening we reached Barura, having marched thirty-five miles in twenty-one hours. At 10 o'clock the following morning Captain Quicke with 216 porters entered the village. He reported that 110 loads alone remained at the main camp. The same day a Mr. Hepburn, whom we had met at Tete, passed through with a large caravan *en route* for the Kafukwe River, whither he was bound on a trading enterprise. He was accompanied by a friend who was at the time sickening from dysentery, and who died a few days later.

From Mr. Hepburn we received news of Bismarck's death, and of complications with Russia, such as from time to time enliven our relations with that Power. Early the next morning we separated. I slept a few miles from Mesenangwe and reached camp at about 9 o'clock. During the ensuing four days most of my time was spent with the sextant, as I was anxious to compare my present and previous observations, with a view to checking the rate of the chronometers. The maximum shade temperature during the month varied between 100° and 105° Fahrenheit; but when the nights are cool, a little heat in the daytime can be borne with equanimity. On the fourth day Barura came into camp with 115 boys, and to my intense pleasure I saw the last load removed the next day. On reaching Barura's village I found Mr. Muller there. He informed me that his boys had not liked the looks

of the boiler, and had decamped. As all Barura's available boys were already employed by us, we found it impossible to raise the sixty-seven substitutes required to take the place of the defaulters, so there was nothing further to be done but to appeal once more to Senhor Ignatio. Barura, who had behaved extremely well, did not accompany us to Chicoa, but remained at his village. I gave him a present I had promised on the condition that he promptly supplied the porters required, and to this I added an additional piece of brilliant cloth wherewith his wife should adorn herself. The old man was very appreciative, and I left him clapping his hands and scraping the ground with his feet — the local method of salute. On the 16th I was again at Chicoa, where the whole expedition, except Mr. Weller and his sixty-seven loads, were assembled. Senhor Ignatio readily met my demand for porters, to whom I promised an extra two yards per man should they bring in their loads on or before the 20th.

For a camp I selected a sandbank in the middle of the river-bed and four hundred yards from either bank. Here we had a current of fresh air, and, it being the dry season, were free from night mists ; while, since we were some distance from the rank vegetation of the banks, the mosquito had no part with us.

Until Mr. Weller's arrival on the 21st I gave myself up entirely to the sun and stars. We had now everything with us, and with the appearance of our engineer the work of constructing the launches began in real earnest. At Chicoa I picked up six more boys — Fernando and Sabou, from whom I parted at Cairo a couple of years later, being two of them. With the former I was particularly pleased. He had accompanied me on my recent journey to Mesenangwe, and although I moved at the rate of four miles an hour, he, with a fifty-pound load, was always at my heels and never out of spirits.

While at Chicoa two traders came in. They imagined they were destined to travel up the Zambezi. They had not, however, been in the place a couple of hours when they went out of their way to rub Senhor Ignatio up

the wrong way. That worthy not unreasonably resented certain behaviour on their part. The next I heard of them was that they had decided to abandon their trip, as "the Portuguese place everything in the way." I was not surprised to hear this. A little tact would have removed the obstacles, and by the exercise of even less the trouble would never have arisen.

On the 26th, two days after the *Constance* had been launched in the waters of the Middle Zambezi, we received a call from a Portuguese officer, and the agent of the Companha da Zambezia at Kashombe. The former brought a message of welcome from Senhor Solla, the commandant of that station, and assured us that his services were at our disposal.

On the 30th everything was ready for the start, and we bade farewell to Senhor Ignatio. He had behaved extremely well throughout in every matter concerning the expedition, and in addition had kept us well supplied with milk and vegetables, for which he emphatically declined to accept remuneration. I was glad to be able to spare him a rifle, and one or two small things which, I trusted, would be of use to him.

The start was very discouraging. The river was very low, and for the first few miles water could scarcely be found to float the boats, which, though they carried no more than they were designed to hold, were none the less seriously overladened. The current was unduly strong, and the engines were not sufficiently powerful to make headway when so heavily handicapped with an excessive cargo. In consequence, there was much hauling and digging for the first three days, and very little progress. Then a tube went in one of the boilers, and further delay was necessary to repair damages. In face of so much hard work with little or no result — for in a week we were no more than seven miles from Chicoa — it looked as though the steamers would prove far inferior to expectation, even if it were possible to improve matters so far as to progress at all. On the Thames they would have been admirable, but on a great river without lock or weir the conditions of navigation are very different. Under the best of

circumstances we could not expect to do more than fifteen miles a day, and if my original intention of carrying the launches to above the Victoria Falls and navigating the Upper River and its more important affluents were to be carried out in its entirety, our beards would be long and our hair white before we again saw our native hearths. On turning over matters in my mind, I decided on certain modifications so far as the route of the steamers was concerned, and so reasonable did these modifications appear, that I wondered that even under more sanguine impressions I had adopted any other course. The flotilla of course was merely our "supply column" and it mattered little what route it took so long as communication was kept up between it and the exploring parties.

My first step was to call the members of the expedition together, explain my intentions, and invite discussion. I told them that in my view the route of the launches with the bulk of the goods should be shortened, and suggested that they should ascend the Kafukwe, instead of the Upper Zambezi. This would not only save several hundred miles of steaming, but would also offer an opportunity for exploring that very little known river which formed the eastern boundary line of the country we were about to survey. Thus, so far from detracting from the performance of the objects in view, this modification would add an important feature to our work. In this way the supplies could be taken to the mouth of the Kafukwe in two journeys, and while the work of transporting the second consignment with one launch and the barge to the navigable Kafukwe, twenty-five miles above the Zambezi confluence, was in progress, the other launch would run part of the expedition with six months' supplies to the rapids below the Victoria Falls. When about 15° south latitude on the Kafukwe, the launch party would establish a supply camp and open communication with Lialui, with which town the other exploring parties would be in touch. The work in Marotseland finished, we would once more join hands and proceed to the Luapula and the

lakes. In this way ample room would be made for Mr. Muller, who would join us at once, instead of on Lake Mweru.

Every one agreed that this change of plans was necessary and advisable, and arrangements were at once made for the formation of a camp in which to store those goods destined for the second journey.

I watched the moods of the members of the expedition with interest and sympathy, though I am glad to say I had no cause for anxiety. I concluded that two alone did not abandon hope as to our ultimate success, but the veriest pessimist of all retained his equanimity, and gave me a whole-hearted support throughout. I had seen enough of my officers to know that all obstacles would be surmounted.

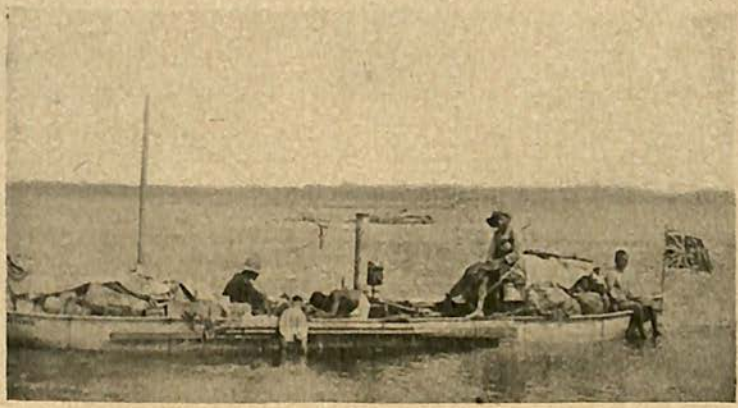
The next day I was asked to convene a second meeting, as a further amendment to the new arrangements was suggested. Mr. Muller acted as spokesman, and spoke to the following effect: —

"The principal object of the expedition is the work in Marotseland. In our opinion everything, if necessary, should be sacrificed to it. There is no doubt that the engines are not sufficiently powerful to make headway against this current with the boats ladened as they are. Our suggestion is that both engines be put into one boat, which should hurry on with you and the surveying party to the Victoria Falls, taking six months' provisions to keep you going till we can open communications on our arrival. Paddlers can be engaged to take the other two boats to the Kafukwe in two journeys, and Weller on his return from the Falls would probably be in time to help the barges on their second journey. By the time the goods had been carried above the Kafukwe cataracts, consumption of food and trading goods would so far have reduced the weight, that the boats should be equal to their task. I will endeavour to raise another twenty boys at Tete when I return to bring my kit, and we will then work our way up the Kafukwe, to any place you may appoint as a base camp, and open communication with you."

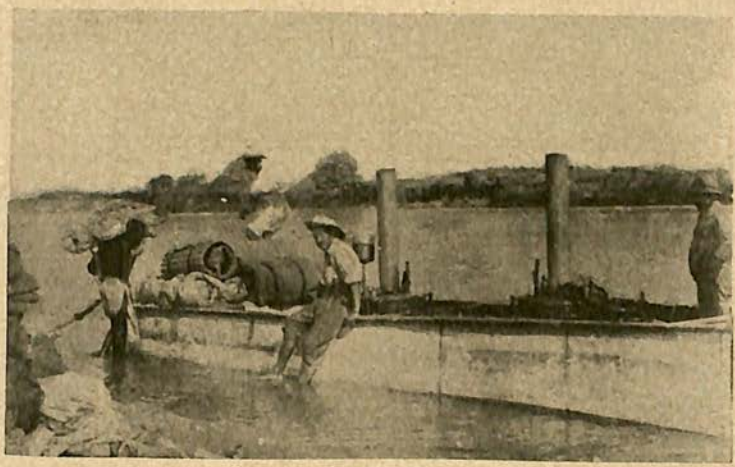
I readily acquiesced; in fact, the same idea had occurred

to me, though for obvious reasons I kept it to myself; for had the suggestion come from me, I felt I might ultimately be laid open to the charge of having left the rear party in the lurch, should anything occur to defeat their efforts, though with Mr. Weller's practical sense and Mr. Muller's indomitable energy and experience, I felt confident that all difficulties would be overcome. This spontaneously expressed suggestion by my officers made any such insinuation impossible even by the most uncharitable, and every one was pleased with the idea which seemed to guarantee the ultimate success of the expedition. Those who were to accompany me were elated at the prospect of rapid movement. Messrs. Weller and Muller, like all sound men, were, I imagine, gratified at being placed in a position of responsibility; for to the former I gave command and full control over the movements of the rear party, with the latter as his right-hand man. Mr. Alexander, who lived for his profession, and whose chief cause for anxiety had been that we should probably move too quickly to allow of his making the most of his opportunities, was glad to find that his fears were not to be realised. For my own part, I felt that by moving rapidly we should be able to complete our work in Marotseland, and recombine without loss of time to either party.

The following day an extra section was inserted into one of the launches, and both engines fixed in her. Loading her up with three tons, we made a trial trip with excellent results—every one was elated at her performance. We therefore decided to make a start as soon as the requisite goods could be selected, and in the meantime I sent Mr. Muller to Chicoa to treat with Senhor Ignatio for forty paddlers to take the barges as far as Zumbo. On his return he told how that worthy, after making a flattering comment on the amicability of our relations, protested that he would gladly acquiesce if I wished it, but as his people lived near the rapids, they did little canoeing and were but indifferent paddlers. He therefore strongly recommended me to approach the commandant at Kashombe on the subject, who would, he felt sure, meet my wishes.



The Over-ladened "Constance"



The "Constance" as She Ascended the Middle Zambezi

CHAPTER IV

A promising start and a hidden rock — Beached and repaired — A good day's progress — The CHANSENGA Rapids — Mr. Muller overboard — The lost treasure — Exciting search by native diver — The recovered belt — A picturesque gorge — An eddy and its legend — The KAKOLORE Rapids — An exciting passage — KASHOMBE station — A rock and leak — Beached and repaired — Mr. Muller bids us *au revoir* — Camp on a sandbank — A hurricane and its results — The boys grow restless — Desertion feared — Good progress — An optical delusion and its cartographic outcome — The *Constance* in a fair wind — The boldness of crocodiles — We rest at KANYEMBE — Senhor Loba's drums and fifes — ZUMBO frontier station — Exquisite scenery — Lupata or KARIBA — A suggestion — Visit from Portuguese commandant — His courtesy — Over the frontier — A tribute to the Portuguese — Another desertion scare — Sultan eats a goat — Captain Hamilton's painful accident — Good things to come — Zumbo tales and their effect on the boys — African credulity

CHAPTER IV

CHANSENGA RAPIDS TO ZUMBO

In spite of the more cheerful aspect of affairs, our start was not destined to be an unqualified success, for we had steamed barely half a mile when a shock and a thud told us we had struck a hidden rock. A slight leak was the result, and there was nothing for it but to unload and beach the launch for repairs. On the following day, October 7, Mr. Weller had repaired the damage, the goods were repacked, and once more we were under way. This time Fate was propitious. A fresh easterly breeze had sprung up, and under steam and sail we made quite seven knots through the water, which gave us a nett progress of about three miles and a half an hour, for the current was still very strong. After travelling twelve miles, we received our first check in the Chansenga Rapids. Here a bar of rocks extends obliquely across the river-bed. Over the lower ridges of this a minor proportion of the water flows in shallow streams, but the main volume rushes in a nine-knot stream through a narrow opening in the rocky bar. Four attempts proved that the main stream was too strong for us; once when the wind freshened we almost succeeded, but a temporary lull caused us to fall back. The launch was then off-loaded, and hauled, empty, through a shallow subsidiary stream. So buoyant was our aluminium boat that when empty she drew barely seven inches.

Except during the driest season of the year these rocks must be completely submerged, and for at least eight months in the year be far below the reach of any river steamer.

After making creditable progress during the early hours

of the ensuing morning, an unlooked-for incident checked us for a few hours. We were steaming up a narrow, deep channel separating the right bank of the river from an island, when Mr. Muller, who had been ashore to stretch his legs, missed his footing while attempting to step on board, and down he went in deep water. He was quickly hauled into the launch, but to his mortification he discovered that he had lost his belt. This belt contained thirty-five sovereigns and a five-pound note, the bulk of which was expeditionary cash with which he had undertaken to settle certain accounts for me in Tete. Most of the boys could swim like fish, but the presence of an unusual number of crocodiles in the neighbourhood played on their nerves, and not one could be induced to risk his life, even with an English sovereign as a reward for success. At length a boy whom I had engaged the previous evening informed us that his father was an expert diver, and if he could not recover the belt, no one could. Thus, if none was disposed to jeopardise his own skin, one at least was quite prepared to undergo the risk of providing a hungry crocodile with a meal at the expense of a father. In a few minutes Mr. Muller had departed with the dutiful son with a view to seeing how far a sovereign would tempt the father to embark on the enterprise. In his absence we spent the time firing at crocodiles from a rocky eminence. Three at least went down with broken skulls, and as time went on, fewer showed themselves, and these at greater distance, so that probably none remained in the immediate vicinity of the hidden belt. At last our only hope arrived — a dried-up old man with a cast in one eye. On being shown the place where the mishap occurred, he assured us of his willingness to earn the sovereign. "But," he said, "it is necessary that I should have a stretch of red calico."

"Why is red calico necessary?"

"It will act as a charm over the crocodiles."

The fact of my having no calico of that colour he stigmatised as unfortunate, and he quite looked as though he would "cry off" his bargain. However, the old impostor ulti-

mately consented to test the virtue of the blue material, though he did not disguise his doubts as to its efficacy.

Once possessed of his fraudulently acquired loin-cloth, he performed a series of grimaces and gesticulations over it, crossed the channel some two hundred yards below, examined the bank where the accident had occurred, and then, seizing his nose with the fingers of his left hand, disappeared in search of the lost property feet foremost and right arm uplifted. Several times he rose to the surface empty-handed, and after each dive remained below an inconceivably long time. Once he disappeared for so long that we feared the blue cloth had failed to perform its function and that the old man had found a resting-place within the limits of a hungry "mugger." However, he showed himself at last, but still without the belt. Had the current already buried it in the shifting sand? Or had the old rascal divined its value, deemed several sovereigns more desirable than one, and hidden them away for a future visit? Another dive a few yards lower down was to dispel this uncharitable suspicion, for shortly a black hand grasping the belt rose above the water's surface. A shout of relief and gratification greeted the old man's reappearance, and Mr. Muller literally went into ecstasies of delight. When the reward was paid, he asked the boys why they had not deemed it worth their while to earn so much money in so short a time.

"We never thought we would be paid," was the reply.

"Well, now you know that when an Englishman says a a thing he means it," was Mr. Muller's rejoinder.

Once more under way we passed up a narrow, picturesque gorge with scarcely any perceptible stream. The gorge is about half a mile in length, and for no perceptible reason a strong current suddenly disappears at the upper entrance only to make an equally sudden reappearance at the farther extremity. I imagine a strong sub-stream must run below the still surface waters for these few hundred yards, and the following legend would seem to give colour to the theory.

Near the upper entrance a wall of rock rises abruptly from

the dull, sombre water, and, at its base, for a few yards only, the current shows itself in the form of a whirling eddy. This, the boys assured me, was the headquarters of the great river-god; and though many boats have gone down within these sacred precincts, neither boat, goods, nor bodies have ever been recovered. The Portuguese — by which I presume is meant the black article — always throw in wine and calico to propitiate the deity. "Would I not do likewise?" A negative reply elicited the expression of their conviction that disaster would overtake us in due course. On leaving the gorge, a sharp turn to the right showed us the Kakolore Rapids, which are formed by the passage of the river between two walls of rock standing only some fifty feet apart. The result is an eight-knot current and a great depth of water. Beyond the southern rock two hundred yards of sand stretch to the southern bank of the river-bed. This, when the Zambezi is not at its lowest, is included in the actual bed of the river, and then, as rapids, Kakolore must to all intents and purposes cease to exist.

With a strong wind astern and both engines working under full pressure these rapids gave us an exciting ten minutes. There being no foothold ahead, the tow-rope was out of the question, so that the alternative to steaming through the swift stream at the neck was the emptying of the launch and the unbolting of her sections.

Inch by inch we crept forward when the wind was at its highest, but during the brief lulls between the gusts we would lose a few feet of our hard-earned progress. In this way it took nearly a quarter of an hour to steam fifty yards. Then, when we had passed the last eddy, the little boat with her sail well filled forged forward at a rapid rate, thus giving a good idea of the force of the current she had only just been able to overcome.

We camped about half a mile above Kakolore, and the next day encountered a miniature counterpart of the lower river. Many shallow streams were passing between numerous sandbanks, as they do between the Shiré and Tete, but here,

in place of being three or four miles wide, the bed does not exceed eight hundred yards. That night we slept within three miles of the Portuguese station of Kashombe, and on the following day reached that place. The first sight of a steamer in these parts caused great excitement among the native population, and in this instance a large crowd lined the bank to watch our approach. The neighbourhood of the bank was rocky, so we steamed in very slowly and cautiously; but this did not save us from striking a submerged rock, which, at the time, did not appear to have damaged the boat.

We immediately repaired to the fort to pay our respects to Senhor Augusto da Fonseca Mesquita e Solla, the commandant. We had not, however, been long in conversation when Captain Hamilton hurriedly appeared to tell us that the launch was sinking. I excused myself and returned to the river, where I found Mr. Weller awaiting me with the launch under full steam. There was no sand on the bank, but a quarter of a mile away was an island sandbank in midstream. We decided to steam across and beach her there. Here we made our camp for the night, and in the morning a patch was riveted over the leak and the boat was once more loaded up and ready for work. I took advantage of an opportunity for realising the trolly at a small loss only; for Senhor Solla coveted it as a means for transporting brick and building material from one place to another. So the end of the troublesome vehicle was not undignified — probably it has the credit of being the first and only wheeled vehicle in this part of Africa.

On the 11th we bade what at the time we imagined to be a mere *au revoir* to our good friend Mr. Muller, for we hoped and expected to see his cheery face on the Kafukwe before the lapse of many months. My last words to him were, "Look after yourself, and don't overtax your strength." But alas! Theodore Muller was a man who must work at full pressure.

Satisfactory progress was made during the next few days, at the end of which, owing to the rocky nature of both banks,

we made our nightly camp on a sandbank in the middle of the river. At this season of the year the climate is little short of perfect — dry and warm in the daytime and cool and clear at night. Tents in such a climate are superfluous, and we preferred to sleep in the open in full gaze of Heaven's star-bespangled depths. But sleeping on sandbanks is occasionally fraught with discomfort, and this night it did not compare favourably with peaceful repose on a spring mattress within solid brick walls.

By midnight clouds had obscured the stars, the wind howled, and a violent rainless hurricane broke over us. In an instant the fire was buried, as was everything we had on shore, and it was only by continual movement that we escaped a like fate. With the rise of the sun the wind dropped, and, as it did so, four dust-begrimed white men and a score of blacks were to be seen digging everywhere on hands and knees. Conversation was terse and to the point —

"Here's another plate."

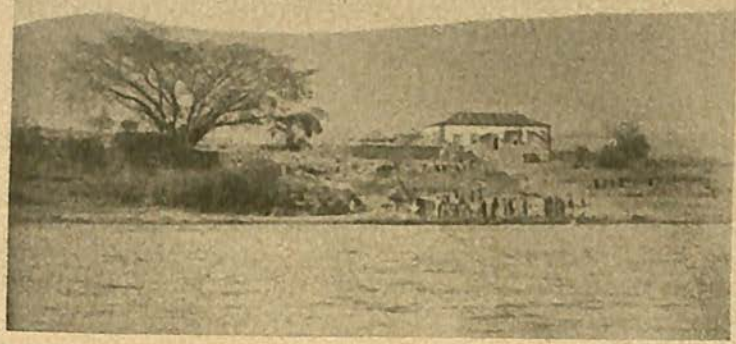
"Anybody seen a right-hand boot?"

"I wonder what has become of my coat."

"Here's some one's haversack." And so forth.

At length the pots and pans, knives and forks, rifles and clothes, and other effects were unearthed from their sandy graves, and after bath and breakfast had removed all visible trace of this most comfortless night we prepared for another day's work.

About sixty miles were accounted for during the ensuing four days. The boys seemed restless, and I began to suspect that desertion *en masse* was contemplated. Probably they thought they were getting quite far enough from home. At times they were to be seen talking in groups — not with that continuous flow of tittle-tattle which is checked alone by sleep, but earnestly and in suppressed tones. Then they would sit motionless and speechless, their heads resting on their hands. I knew these moods from past experience, and on the evening of the 17th felt almost certain that the morrow would find me in hot pursuit. I told my Zulu servant



Zumbo—Portuguese Frontier Station



Lower Entrance to the Kariba Gorge

Machin, who was in no way associated with the Zambezi boys, to keep a watch on them, and wake me if he saw any active preparation being made. However, in the morning they were still with us, and after steaming fifteen miles against a strong current, we camped in sight of the mountain which overshadows the Portuguese frontier station of Zumbo. This mountain, owing to the effect of the mirage, appears to rise from the farther extremity of a long reach of river. I was told by a German who had travelled the river as far as Zumbo that all the maps of this part of the river were wrong, with the exception of one he had seen in the possession of a Portuguese. Later I saw this map myself, and can best describe it as a very excellent representation of a well-knotted blackthorn stick. Both the German and the cartographer had fallen victims to this remarkable optical delusion, which I must say has quite as realistic an appearance as the phantom lake on the South African plateau, which has so often deceived the thirsty traveller of limited experience.

On the 19th we had the opportunity of testing the capability of the *Constance* under a fair and favourable wind. In something under seven hours she travelled twenty-three miles, which, since the current was by no means a sinecure, was a very good performance.

The crocodiles are unusually bold hereabouts. On one and the same day two of the boys had narrow escapes of being taken. A boy whom I had sent ashore to buy some meal was wading knee deep, when one of these reptiles made a dart for him. Fortunately he saw the brute coming and jumped smartly aside. Later, as we rounded a bend of the river skirted by tall reeds, another attempted to seize Fernando's foot as he sat near me with his feet hanging a few inches above the water. He quickly drew his legs up, and, as he did so, the great jaws closed, and the disappointed reptile dived porpoise-like into the depths below.

At midday we put into Kanyembe, the station of a coloured Portuguese named Loba. He insisted on some of us repair-

ing to his residence, which was a large, well-built house approached by some eight stone steps, on either side of which was a stuffed lion fixed to the balustrade. Senhor Loba, though very black, had regular, well-cut European features. He had been educated in Lisbon, spoke a little English, and assured us that he could read it as well as he could read Portuguese. His spacious sitting room contained a very presentable library, containing, among others, several English books of travel, which to my surprise included the account of my previous travels in Marotseland. Loba's father was a man of some note in this part of Africa and had made a considerable fortune as a slave and ivory merchant. On the advent of the Portuguese at Zumbo he refused to pay duty on his ivory, of which he had a large quantity stored in his cellars. Having a formidable armed retinue, he successfully defied the tax collector during his lifetime, but at his death the whole was seized, and his son was left a comparatively poor man.

At the termination of the visit we returned to the launch with a great show of dignity. A drum and fife band marched in front, and I found myself hoisted on the shoulders of a stalwart native who could not be induced to put me down until the steamer was reached.

On the 21st we steamed into Zumbo. The scenery here is extremely picturesque. High, wooded mountains rise from the river-bank and stretch far to the south and west. The channel itself is broad, deep, and slack in current. A few hundred yards beyond Zumbo, the Loangwa River, which marks the boundary line between the British and Portuguese spheres, enters the parent river from the north. When we passed, the bed of sand, which is about one hundred yards wide, was dry, except for a shallow stream, barely ankle deep, which trickled through the bank thrown up by the heavy volume of the big river. Almost opposite, a bend from the south brings the Zambezi through a beautiful mountain pass some two hundred yards wide, narrowing later to half the breadth. This broken gorge is known by the people on the Portuguese side as "Lupata," but by those occupying the

western extremity as "Kariba" or "Kariva" — the "v" and the "b" being synonymous. Livingstone spoke of it as "Kariva." Now both "Lupata" and "Kariba" signify in different languages what we understand by a gorge. On the Lower Zambezi the reader will remember that we steamed through the Lupata Gorge, and beyond the Kafukwe confluence there is also a Kariba gorge. Whether the one or the other of these names be adopted, the nett result is the same—confusion. Personally I am loth to see names other than those indigenous to the country applied to the natural features of Africa. Both Smith and Jones may be very excellent and praiseworthy individuals, but Mount Smith or Jones River read and sound incongruous, and such vandalism should be avoided where possible. There seems to be but one reasonable way out of the difficulty — the addition to the local name of a distinguishing one in the case of the gorge in question. In a paper which I read before the Royal Geographical Society on the subject of the expedition under discussion, I suggested that this beautiful mountain pass would be appropriately distinguished under the name of "Livingstone's Kariba." The "father of modern explorers" was in all probability the first white man to visit the place, and in the annals of African exploration the unique influence his labours have exercised on the future of a great continent has placed him head and shoulders above the best of those who have followed him.

We remained at Zumbo till late the following afternoon, as I was anxious to observe for longitude. The commandant of the fort was absent on our arrival, but returned just as we were preparing to continue the journey. He courteously assured me that if he could be of any assistance either in the present or at any future time, his services were at my disposal. I returned thanks, though not in need of any help at the moment. If the boys should succeed in evading our vigilance, which I was convinced they would endeavour to do sooner or later, he might be able to render us very acceptable assistance.

That evening we crossed the borders and slept within the

British sphere. It is hard to explain why one should experience feelings of elation on passing within the confines of the empire, even though in a country which has been traversed by only a very few Englishmen and as yet has not even a nominal local administration. And yet it was so. The very air we breathed seemed freer. Nothing could have been kinder or more courteous than the reception we had everywhere received at the hands of the Portuguese. They had made us feel thoroughly at home in all respects, and we all deeply appreciated the many tributes of friendship of which we had been the favoured recipients, and yet the very name of British territory appealed to our feelings in no small degree. It is to be presumed that nature has implanted in the bosom of man a special predilection in favour of the shade of his own flag.

That night we had another desertion scare, for Machin told me that the Zambezi boys had made up their minds to abscond on the first possible occasion. Again, however, the circumstances did not seem to them to be favourable. Although the black personnel of the expedition did not disappear that night, its larder did. A goat had been hung from the mast ready for consumption on the morrow. Captain Hamilton's dog Sultan saw his opportunity and seized it, and on the morrow a few of the larger bones were the only external evidence that remained of a full-sized goat. Had further evidence been required to fix the guilt on the culprit, it was to be found in the internal condition of the great Dane — he was much distended. Poor Hamilton was himself in trouble, having also run amuck with the commissariat. Three days previously, whilst holding our dinner, a hot and savoury stew, the pot slipped from his grasp, and the boiling contents fell on his foot, which was now skinless and painful. For movement he had perforce to crawl on his hands and knees or be carried from place to place by a couple of boys. Though a keen sportsman, he was denied all opportunity of hunting; but he bore his pain and disappointment with that quiet stoicism which he always practised under adverse circumstances.

As we steamed up a beautiful piece of river that day, I endeavoured to infuse a little spirit amongst the boys, by talking to them of the good time they would have when we reached the country to which we were going, and alluded to the full flesh-pots into which they would dip their hands.

Fernando shook his head incredulously. "The country in front," he said, "is bad. In a few days we reach a people who are dying of sickness. Next we come to a tribe whose women bring poisoned food for sale; and further on there are savages who eat men."

I laughed and asked him where he had heard all these stories.

"The people at Zumbo say so," was his reply.

"Well then," I answered, "the people at Zumbo tell you lies. They don't know the country over there; but I do. I have travelled among the people of whom they tell these lies, and have always been treated well by them. They are a good people, and their chief is a very big chief, and I am his friend. He knows I am on the way to see him again, and will welcome us to his country."

And the conversation seemed to have a good effect.

It is marvellous how the African either believes, or affects to believe, that beyond the radius within which he can move in safety every imaginable horror is rampant. I have been killed two or three times by the Press and eaten once, but I should be sorry to say how often I have (in the view of natives through whose country I have travelled) marched to certain death.

CHAPTER V

Superb river scenery — Inspected by baboons — A dangerous rapid — Hard and exciting work — Portuguese officer drowned — Stability of *Constance* — A lioness on the bank — Unsuccessful pursuit — A rhinoceros — Stiff current and slow progress — A bad leak and a narrow escape — Three days on a desert island — Heat and thunder — Captain Quicke bags a palla — A game country — The BATONGA tribe — The river more navigable — Lions around camp — Good effect on boys — Crocodile charges the *Constance* — More fine scenery — Snags and a wider river — The KAFUKWE confluence — Its falls and cataracts — Its future possibilities — Captain Quicke kills a hippo — The reward of greed — Local native robbed by boys — Compensation and deprivation — The germ of native friction — The bend of the Zambezi — The KARIBA Gorge — Dangerous rocks — The *Constance* unbolted — An immigrant South African tribe — The taint of Buluwayo — Boys demand higher wages — They leave in a hurry

CHAPTER V

THROUGH THE KARIBA GORGE

FOR two days we travelled amidst scenery equal in grandeur to anything I have ever witnessed. First we passed through two short gorges — tortuous and varied in their beauty. Trees in rich dark foliage for the most part lined the banks, while beyond them wooded hills rose to heights varying from two to five hundred feet. Between the gorges, two huge pillars of rock, not more than fifty yards apart, rose precipitously from the water's edge, and between these the whole river flowed in a deep clear stream. This great gate introduced to us another class of scenery not so majestic in character, but rendered beautiful by the intense variety of its colouring, which was still further enhanced by the brilliant rays of a sun shining from a rich blue sky. A bright sandy beach was fringed with ochre reeds tipped with green; immediately behind was the dark sombre green of non-deciduous trees, while the hills in the background were clothed in a medley of tints from a delicate bronze to bright green — the spring garment of a "high veldt" forest. Add to this the warm blue sky above, and the toned reflection in the glassy water below, and it will be difficult to imagine a more charm-inspiring landscape. A mile of this, and a sudden turn to the right brought us to the entrance of the second gorge, where the river does not average much more than fifty yards in width. In places rocky walls rise abruptly from the deep bed, in others the clean-cut banks were green with grass, on which groups of baboons squatted in line and watched the approach of the steamer with an interest so human-like that at a medium distance it was diffi-

cult to decide whether we were objects of curiosity to man or monkey. For some distance we steamed against a current so slack as to be almost imperceptible; but "after a calm cometh a storm," and on turning a corner we found ourselves face to face with the most dangerous rapid we had thus far encountered — in fact, it was the first serious obstacle to which we had been opposed, and its negotiation proved no easy task. Here the river passes through a narrow neck formed by a wall of basalt on the right bank and large rough boulders on the left. On the right the water is deep, and though passable for a ten- or twelve-knot steamer, proved too much for the little *Constance.* Having a view to the very difficult character of this bank for towing purposes, I considered that the stony shallows of the left bank offered less serious risks; for in the one case a false step might cost us the boat and possibly our own lives, in the other there was greater risk of hull damage, — but this could be repaired without difficulty.

To within 150 yards of the main rapid, the boat was towed at the expense of hard work, but without danger. Here, however, a nasty bit was encountered, and once the strength of the current forced the rope from the grip of the boys. On clearing this a back wash helped us to within a few yards of the neck, and we prepared to face the music. During the first ten yards of the rapid we estimated the fall in the water level to be three feet. Below there came a succession of short, choppy waves churned up by the angry torrent, and followed in turn by conflicting eddies which seemed to wrestle one with the other as the water sped onward. In the first attempt the boys were unable to prevent the bows from being forced round, and we were driven downstream at a rapid pace, and not till we had lost some two hundred yards of hard-earned ground, could we clear the seething current and make the bank. In the second effort, after a quarter of an hour's hard work, we had almost succeeded in mastering the situation. As the bows reached the crest of the rapids, so great was the force of the current, that although they

themselves were all but submerged, the keel three feet behind was scarcely covered. Success seemed within our grasp when we found ourselves held as in a vice — two hidden rocks absolutely precluded farther advance. There was but one course left open to us — to let the launch drop a few yards downstream and haul her into the back wash referred to above. Here, under the lee of a jutting rock, the goods were off-loaded, and we made a fourth attempt, but once more we were to be defeated in our efforts; for after a few exciting moments the current struck her starboard bow, round again she went, dragging the rope from the boys' grasp, and we were again swished downstream at the rate of some ten miles an hour, there to commence again from the very beginning. The water seethed all around us as in a boiling cauldron, but as there were no surface rocks in midstream, we passed down safely. Again we reached the critical point, but this time the rope snapped, and we made another rapid movement to the rear. The sixth attempt was the last, and after a long and desperate pull the *Constance* at last rode peacefully in calm water.

Two or three years earlier these rapids had been the scene of a fatal disaster. A Portuguese officer was making the ascent, when the tow-rope broke, and his boat, turning broadside to the current, capsized, and he with part of his crew perished. I consider that our experience here, added to others of a later date, speaks volumes for the stability of the Hodgetts principle of hull construction. We were three times forced broadside into the current where the water was most disturbed, and though the *Constance* had six inches less freeboard than the boats used by the Portuguese, she did not ship a pint of water, even before she was lightened by the removal of her cargo.

Shortly after midday the following afternoon the launch was reloaded and continued her course up the gorge. While in progress a lioness was sighted taking water at the river. Captain Quicke and myself went ashore and set off in pursuit, each going his own way, so as to increase the prospect of

intercepting her. After a fruitless search we returned. I had caught a glimpse of her head as she glanced over the trunk of a fallen tree lying across a ravine at a distance of two hundred yards, but she got clean away, and nothing further was seen of her.

In the evening we camped immediately clear of the gorge, where the river widens and becomes both shallower and swifter. While out hunting, early the next morning, I encountered a rhinoceros moving slowly down a deep ravine leading to the river, but almost entirely obscured by leafless thorn bush. As I caught sight of the high, blackish shoulder, I fired a soft lead bullet into it, being under the impression that the animal was a wildebeest; but when the ponderous animal dashed up the incline, I realised the mistake I had made in not playing the waiting game. The bullet, which would no doubt have bagged a wildebeest, was placed too high and had not sufficient penetrative power to do much harm to the rhinoceros. I followed him for some distance through a rough undulating country covered with thick thorn bush, but finding no more blood than would be expected from a flesh wound, ultimately gave up the chase as useless, for he had the pace of me, and I felt sure that his wound was not sufficiently severe to weaken him.

The river was now nearly half a mile wide, the high banks being lined with the dark, heavily leaved trees, occurring in so many places on the middle river. Undulations covered with a forest of deciduous trees in their spring foliage sloped away from either bank. The current was so strong and the air so still that three days' very hard work only placed eight miles to our credit, and culminated in an accident which well-nigh proved disastrous in its results.

A gravel bank, over which a very small proportion of the river's volume escaped, stretched almost from bank to bank. Between the right bank and a small gravel island, only some forty yards from it, the main stream rushed by at a pace which offered resistance far too severe to be overcome by the engines of the *Constance*. A jutting precipitous rock on the

mainland denied all foothold for a towing party, since the bank beyond receded at almost a right angle. Thus the only course open to us was to round the head of the gravel island as best we could. In doing so the boys were compelled to tow at an angle of about thirty degrees just at that point where the current was most severe. The strain proved too much for them, and the rope was dragged from their hands. Three times was this performance repeated, and three times we were helplessly carried downstream. On the last occasion we were bumped violently on the stony bottom, and sprang a bad leak through which the boat commenced to fill rapidly. To add to our discomfiture the rope had fouled the propeller, and we bade fair in this helpless plight to go down in deep water. The propeller was freed from this entanglement none too soon, the engines were set in motion, and we ran aground on the island in a sinking condition. Everything was wet through — bales, ration cases, and clothes. We were imprisoned on that small bank of boulders for three days, repairing the damaged hull and drying the goods. Every ration case had to be opened and every tin within it opened, for unfortunately these were not hermetically sealed. Wherever there was a stone with a surface flat enough for the purpose, the ingredients were to be seen spread out in the sun — oatmeal, rice, tapioca, tea; dried, or more properly speaking, wet, fruits were dotted about the inhospitable little island, and in spite of this precaution many were the cups of musty tea which reminded us in the future of this troublesome adventure. By the morning of the fourth day, thanks to Mr. Weller's skill, the little boat was as seaworthy as ever, and was hauled round the head of the island to be loaded up in still water.

During our imprisonment on this island of rocks, — for we had no means of reaching the mainland, — the first rain of the coming wet season broke on us in the form of a violent thunder-storm. Before the storm burst the maximum shade temperature reached 105.5 Fahr. Such heat had a drying effect on the moistened provisions and calico, but quite the

reverse on the skins of those who were hammering rivets and doing other manual labour from sunrise to sunset.

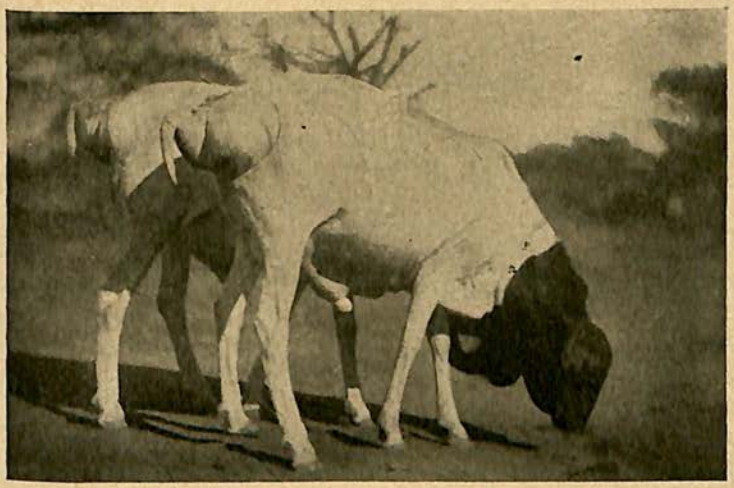
We left the scene of our troubles on the first of November. The current was still very strong, and by nightfall we had succeeded in making only six and a half miles, reaching the confluence of the Mosika, a small tributary river, and here we camped. Captain Quicke took his rifle out the next morning, and returned with a palla, thereby replenishing a larder which had been empty for the past five days. Though not in exactly a good game country, we had reached a part of the river sufficiently remote from civilisation to allow of our procuring as much game as was required to keep the cooking-pots well supplied, — that is, when not compelled by untoward circumstances to take up our quarters on desert islands. The numerous buffalo skulls encountered on the veldt showed that the district had been ravaged by the rinderpest epidemic of two years previously. Prior to that cruel visitation this must have been a favourite resort of game, for everything was in favour of its having been so — the country, the sparseness of population, and the comparative abundance of game still surviving that most destructive of all scourges. Waterbuck, palla, zebra, bushbuck, and a few koodoo are still to be found near the river, and, according to native report, the inlying country holds other species, which are not as a rule to be found within a few miles of large rivers, unless driven, by lack of water in the country of their choice, to make midnight or early morning expeditions there for the purpose of slaking their thirst. We should all have liked to make excursions inland, in search of a more varied bag, but if we were to reach the plateau beyond the Victoria Falls before the full force of the wet season was upon us, it was absolutely imperative to press onwards and to content ourselves with what fell in our way.

In addition to the antelopes named we could generally vary our diet with either a guinea-fowl or a goose, the former being particularly plentiful on the Zambezi generally.

We had now reached the outlying districts of the Batonga



Carrying Game to Camp



The Fat-tail Sheep of Africa

tribe, which lies to the west of 29° 30′ east longitude. The Batonga is a widespread tribe whose country extends as far west as 26° E., where it forms part of the Marotse kingdom. For the past seventy years the western section of the tribe has been known as Matoka by their Marotse conquerors, and usually as Batoka by white men, who have been much prone to confuse the "ma's," the "ba's," the "va's," in this part of Africa. The eastern Batonga are a wilder-looking people than the tribes we had left behind us, or than their own fellow-tribes in the west, through whose country I travelled in '96. The curiosity our presence evinced and the total absence of cloth amongst them told how little they had come in contact with white men — in fact, they dwell beyond the districts hitherto penetrated by traders from either east, west, or south. In spite of their unsophisticated appearance, they were invariably friendly and hospitable — we seldom passed a chief's kraal without receiving a present of a sheep or a goat.

As we progressed, the river became navigable for much larger craft than ours; the stream, which to the east is frequently distended and broken up into more than one shallow channel, is here confined within a single definite bed, deep and slack in current; the banks, of a dark yellow gravelly clay, are very high and covered with trees. Here and there they have been eaten into by the action of the flood and have become precipitous and destitute of vegetation. At last we had a truce to the everlasting crawling and hauling imposed by the joint effect of a strong stream and weak engines. We moved along at quite a respectable pace, and practised with the Mausers on the foreheads of the numerous crocodiles which continually rose above the surface within a short distance of the launch.

On the 4th of November we were favoured by the presence of lions during the early hours of the night. Machin, who kept us informed of the temper of the boys, expressed the opinion that fear of these animals had exerted quite a salutary effect, and would probably do much to discourage desertion.

If we could but conjure up a troop of lions every few days, these pusillanimous creatures would undoubtedly remain with us. But memory with the unsophisticated native, whether for things good or bad, is proverbially short.

On the 7th an incident occurred which demonstrated the length to which the crocodile will go in districts where he has become accustomed to the succulence of human flesh. As a general rule they are cowardly brutes, and a swimmer may venture into deep water with but little risk; but there are man-eaters amongst them, which would seem to realise how strongly the odds are in their favour so long as they are confined to their own natural element. I have known districts where a woman or child is constantly being taken. As the doomed one nears the bank to draw water, or in play, a great tail sweeps the victim into the river, instantly the cruel jaws close on a leg or an arm, and in a few moments the last ripple has disappeared from the water's surface, and no sign remains of the horrible tragedy. At other times, where animal or human being has ventured to the edge of deep water, the lash of the tail is dispensed with — a swift dart, a leg seized, and the victim's fate is sealed. We had noticed that the natives in the district protected their women by constructing stockades in shallow water within which calabashes could be filled with impunity, and we knew that crocodiles were more than usually bold in the locality.

It was a bright hot day, the current was moderate and water deep, we were moving well, and at the same time enjoying the relapse from the hard and often anxious work of the past, when the incident referred to above created a temporary diversion. The launch was passing within forty yards of a sandbank, and, as was my custom, I was standing at the helm in order to obtain an uninterrupted view of the river ahead. My feet, with which, in the absence of circumstances not calling for special attention, it was my custom to work the tiller, were some eight inches above the water. My attention was first attracted to a slight disturbance of water in a small sandy inlet in the bank we were passing.

This gradually increased until it took the form of a succession of short waves obviously caused by the rapid movement of some object immediately below the surface of the water. This advanced at a great pace in a direct line for the helm of the boat. Then there came a sharp shock delivered on the steelwork immediately below my feet, and a large crocodile had realised — it is to be hoped with some inconvenience to himself — that he was not equal to six and a half tons dead weight. The shock, however, was sufficiently severe to give to those for'ard the impression that we had struck a rock. The brute at once dived into deep water, and perhaps it is as well for me that he made the attack direct instead of resorting to "tail" tactics. Crocodiles have been known to charge canoes in this manner with a view to shaking the occupants into the water.

On the 8th of November we passed through another of those charming pieces of scenery for which the Middle Zambezi is destined to be famous, when the advance of civilisation makes the river more generally known. Narrow and deep, a clear stream ripples past high banks, and is overshadowed by steep forest-clad undulations, while here and there the bright blue surface of the water is pierced by sand spits, which lend striking variety in colour.

Our journey the next day was up a gradually widening river as we approached the Kafukwe confluence. Here numerous snags or fallen trees, washed away with the banks on which they had grown, are distributed throughout the bed in considerable numbers, and render it necessary to use caution in navigation. The river being at its lowest, and yet not too shallow for our purpose, there was less danger from these obstructions than there would have been had the majority been hidden below the surface. Rocks as a rule dent aluminium, but a sharp snag will often rend it, and thus create a serious leak.

The Kafukwe enters the parent river in an eminently navigable stream. High banks standing rather less than two hundred yards apart are covered with trees reaching to the

water's edge. For some twenty miles from the confluence with the Zambezi, the stream is deep and slack. Then there is an everlasting barrier to navigation, for within the short distance of about fifteen miles the river leaps over a series of rocky precipices from an altitude of over three thousand to something under two thousand feet above the sea level. Above this series of falls and cataracts, which were visited by Captain Hamilton at a later date, a very little engineering will destroy the few minor obstructions which interfere with navigation for nearly five hundred miles of river penetrating far to the northeast. I have not seen the higher reaches of the Kafukwe in the dry season, but from what I saw of this charming river during the wet season of '95–'96, I am convinced that at no very distant date it will be utilised as a branch trade route to connect the Great African Transcontinental Railway with the fine healthy plateau inhabited by the Mashikolumbwe and Bamashasha.

In the evening Captain Quicke shot a hippopotamus, which was bagged on the following morning. The local natives revelled in his flesh, and we were able to add many pounds of excellent cooking fat to the larder. As for the boys, they got very little of it. It is customary to reduce the allowance of meal when meat is so superabundant, and on this occasion, imagining they saw their way to full meal rations in addition to as much meat as they could consume, a deputation protested that they did not like meat and would prefer to have their two pounds of meal. They received their two pounds, but were sadly disappointed when they saw every vestige of meat carried off by the local natives. At that moment they would gladly have forgone all their meal, if only they could have obtained possession of the fat, juicy meat in its stead.

Three days later the boys had to learn a further lesson. A local native complained that salt he had offered for sale had been taken from him by force. Of course each and every boy protested his innocence of the theft, and the salt was not forthcoming. I was quite satisfied after hearing the evidence that the salt had been stolen by one of the boys, and

had little doubt but that the Zambezi "set" were at least accessories to the fact. I therefore ordered two fowls and a melon in their possession to be handed over to the complainant by way of compensation, equally to the chagrin of the boys and the gratification of the injured one. When everything was aboard and the steamer in progress, a search was made for the stolen salt. It was found stowed away between two bales, and when I insisted on its being thrown overboard, the delinquents seemed to realise that in this case, at least, the pilfering of the inhabitants was not a profitable enterprise.

My impression is that more trouble with native tribes originates in the overbearing conduct of the white man's servants, porters, and, more especially, "askaris," than in any other cause. Born and bred to oppression, the African is equally ready to give and receive harsh treatment. To him the weaker has always been the legitimate prey of the stronger; and the meanest slave, when he finds his "prestige" enhanced on being taken into the service of a white man, is ever ready to do unto others as he would they should not do unto him. To crush these symptoms in the bud is at once wise and just. Keep the black man well in hand, and he usually makes an excellent servant; but give him an inch, and Heaven only knows how many ells he will take.

For four days after leaving the Kafukwe the course of the Zambezi took us in a southwesterly direction. The river continued to be eminently navigable, in fact the farther we ascended its course the fewer were the difficulties with which we had to contend.

On the afternoon of the 13th we entered a mountain pass, through which the river worms its way in a deep, quiet stream. On neither of the two large-scale maps in our possession was there any indication of the deep gorge and the high mountain range through which it winds. The Kariba Gorge lay two or three days to the southwest in both of them. How this great landmark had escaped the notice of previous travellers seemed a mystery. That evening we camped amidst magnificent surroundings — huge rocks and lofty wooded

hills rose all around us, and at our feet the clear still stream moved, almost imperceptibly, seawards.

Early next morning we glided easily through one of Nature's most favourite sanctuaries. Air — cool and bracing; atmosphere — clear and bright; and scenery — perfect. Small wonder that one sometimes feels happy even in Africa! But such intervals are necessarily transitory. Gradually the current quickened and dark precipitous walls of basalt rose abruptly from a great depth of water. The stream was soon too strong for the *Constance*, but with the aid of the tow-rope we continued to creep forward until the roar of disturbed waters and ominous-looking rocks, some above and some immediately below the surface, warned us of troubles ahead.

After the launch had been towed into a little rocky nook, just large enough to offer shelter from the now seething torrent, we scrambled over the rough boulders to reconnoitre. Two hundred yards in front a river from the south poured over the rocky wall and added many conflicting eddies to the already disturbed water. Pointed rocks rose here and there, and the basaltic cliffs attained a height which well-nigh rendered an appeal to the tow-rope impossible. My impression was that we might have passed up these rapids, and had there been no other way of getting above them, we probably should have done so. But the risk appeared to be very great on account of the many rocks in the bed of the river, for had one of these penetrated the boat, there was little possibility of our being able to save her, and only those of us who weathered the rocks and kept afloat for the best part of a mile would be able to make the bank alive. In the circumstances I decided that the launch should be taken to pieces and carried in sections to quiet water above the rapids.

During the afternoon local natives put in an appearance. These people were not Batongas, but were distinctly of the South African type. Their language was incomprehensible to the Zambezi boys, but Machin, who was a Zulu, could make himself understood. They are undoubtedly refugees from the south, and had possibly receded before the Matabele

oppression, or more probably were a section of that heterogeneous community which had preferred to place space between themselves and their white conquerors rather than settle down under civilised rule. Police hats from Buluwayo, old coats, a brilliantly striped jersey, showed that these alone of the tribes we had hitherto encountered were in communication with the mining districts; but when they spoke of the "steamer which runs along the ground which the Great Englishman is bringing up to the Zambezi," we required no further confirmation of the opinion we had formed. This was all very interesting, but when they came to tell the boys how that two or three pounds a month could be earned in English territory, these beauties came to the conclusion that they were sadly underpaid, in spite of the fact that they were receiving half as much again as they could earn in their own country. In due course a deputation waited on me and demanded the Buluwayo rate of wage, and also that they should be paid that evening. They left in a hurry!

CHAPTER VI

The KARIBA Gorge and SANYATE River — Inaccuracy of maps — Local natives fight shy of boiler — Wholesale desertion and hot pursuit — Absconders overtaken and marched to camp — A lesson taught — Stiff currents — The KAIUNGWA Rapids — Detailed account of their passage — A navigable stretch — Glimpse of a lioness — The NANGILILA tribe — The KANSALA Rapids — Over the BATONGA border — The steamer's effect on natives and baboons — The LUTALA Gorge — Magnificent scenery — Perpetual movement — Uncongenial though necessary — Two more gorges — More scenery — A police corporal's camp — First news of battle of Omdurman, and Fashoda incident — Boy bitten by snake — The terrors of death — Non-poisonous and unhurt — Native enthusiasm on the banks — An amusing incident — The Zambezi and the MALUNDU Hills — Dangerous rapids — The end of navigation — Character of African rivers — Possibilities of the Middle Zambezi — The effect of the rains — Mr. Weller's experience six weeks later

CHAPTER VI

IN THE BATONGA COUNTRY

It was from the natives that we first learned that we were actually three parts through the Kariba Gorge, and that the rock-bound affluent entering from the south was the Sanyati River. I had been completely deceived by the very erroneous existing maps, of which we possessed the latest. According to these authorities, we were still many miles north of the gorge, and should not have entered it for another twenty-four hours at the earliest.

After the engines had been removed from the launch, arrangements were made with the local natives for the transport of the expeditionary effects to a sand spit two and one-half miles farther upstream, on which the boat could be conveniently reconstructed and launched into navigable water. The boiler was first lashed to a long straight pole, which admitted of its being raised to the shoulders of fourteen boys. Under such conditions seven hundred pounds is not a great weight along a level road, but over the huge scattered rocks lining the Kariba Gorge it was no light task. At all events, so thought these fourteen boys, for after struggling under its weight for twenty yards, they lowered it from their shoulders, refused to have anything more to do with it, and decamped.

On the following morning, as I crawled out of my tent, I was impressed by the unusual stillness which characterised the camp. None of the customary talk and movement disturbed the stillness of the morning. The reason for this was not far to seek, and I soon learned that all the Zambezi boys but three had deserted. Of the three remaining, one was

down with dysentery and could not have marched had he wished to do so, — which he probably did, — a second had remained by virtue of the fact that he was the "brother" or fellow-villager of the sick boy, and as for the third, I was just in time to prevent him from following his companions, for at the moment of my appearance he was already a hundred yards away. I seized my rifle, shouted after him, and he at once accepted my pressing invitation to return.

A serious problem had to be solved, and solved quickly. Either the boys must be brought back, or almost certain disaster would overtake the expedition. There seemed no prospect of supplying the places of deserters without a return to Tete and consequent months of delay. Fortunately the boy Inchanga, who had taken so long to decide between loyalty to his master and loyalty to the decision of his fellows, was in my hands, and would not have been following the deserters were he not cognisant of their movements. I was not long in swallowing a hurried meal, and then, buckling on my revolver — a weapon I had never till now had occasion to wear since I first entered Africa nine years previously — I left camp, accompanied by Captain Quicke and Mr. Weller. Inchanga was of course with me, and was given clearly to understand that if he did not lead me to the runaways, he would suffer the full penalty for his misdeeds. Machin carried my Mauser, and the pursuit was taken up at a brisk pace. Three miles of this brought us to a cluster of villages, at the first one of which inquiries were made, but the inhabitants either could not or would not give any information. At a second, however, the wits of two villagers were sharpened by the promise of a blanket apiece should they be instrumental in the recapture of the deserters. At once they not only recollected having seen them pass not very long before, but were cognisant of the road they had taken. As likely as not these very men had directed the route. Pace was everything now, for in all probability the runaways would travel some three and one-half miles an hour without a halt till late in the afternoon, and thus, if they were only one

hour in front, we would have to travel seven hours at a four-mile pace to see them. I therefore left my companions, and with Machin and the two guides set off at a jog trot, which was kept up for five or six miles. The country was favourable for pursuit, being of short rough undulations, covered with sparse stunted bush. Thus, from the crest of one undulation a view could be obtained as far as the next, and pace checked or spurt made as necessity arose. Suddenly I came face to face with Mr. Weller's personal servant, Jacko, who had evidently thought better of his conduct, and was returning. As I whipped out my revolver and looked my fiercest, he threw himself at my feet and begged me to spare his life. Not having the smallest intention of taking it, I answered:—

"You know the boys' plans. Take me to them, and I will not kill you. Now be off."

By this time I had got what is called my "second wind," and, feeling that no great distance separated me from the objects of pursuit, the pace was still further increased. Shortly, on reaching the crest of an undulation, I saw below me, in a basin-like depression, the row of boys following the winding path in single file, and quite unconscious of pursuit. I started down the slope as quickly and quietly as possible, took them entirely by surprise, and was in their midst before they were aware of my presence. Down went their mats and blankets as, panic-stricken, they dispersed in all directions. A threat to fire on them if they did not stand had the desired effect. They knew their game was up, and became perfectly submissive and subdued. Ordering them to form up, I gave them a piece of my mind:—

"Have you not always been treated well? Have you not always been well fed? And yet this is how you treat me in return! You are slaves, and shall be treated as slaves. You don't understand kindness. Hard work and the 'sjambok' are what you want, and you shall have it."

With Fernando, an excellent boy in whom alone I had felt confidence, I was especially disgusted.

"Can you tell me why I should not kill you for your in-

gratitude?" and I placed the cold muzzle of my revolver against his ear.

What his inside feelings were at this moment I am not in a position to state, but outwardly he remained impassive, and betrayed no signs of emotion or fear. The boy rose higher in my estimation, and feeling that they now realised that I could be harsh if necessary, I lowered the revolver with the warning:—

"If any of you wish to die, run away from me again."

In a few minutes the line, preceded by Machin and followed by myself, was making the return journey. On reaching camp the deserters were paraded with their uniforms and blankets. The former—khaki tunic and knee breeches, with brown leather belt and red fez—had been a great source of pride to them at times. They were constantly to be seen swaggering about a village, inflated with a conscious air of superiority over the native inhabitants, recipients at once of the deference of their more unsophisticated fellows, and the admiration of many a dusky damsel. Of this uniform I decided to deprive them until they had atoned for their misdeeds by a week or two of good conduct. It was therefore handed in and tied into bundles. Exceptions were made in the case of Inchanga and Jacko, both of whom had evidently been tempted into the escapade against their own inclinations.

The two guides were then directed to select a blanket apiece, and this they did with all the careful attention to detail exhibited by ladies in search of material for a new gown. "Of course," I said, addressing the boys as each watched his blanket carefully scrutinised, "you cannot expect me to pay for the trouble you have given me in bringing you back. That would scarcely be fair," and they seemed to recognise the justice of the proceeding, for even the two boys whose blankets were deemed best in the eyes of the guides did not so much as grumble or complain.

No time was lost in commencing work. First the boiler, then the sections and other parts of the launch, and finally the

camp, were conveyed on the shoulders and heads of the delinquents to the new camping-ground. No shirking was allowed, no opportunity for a second attempt at desertion was permitted. Night or day revolver and sjambok were never out of their sight. Under such conditions every stick was transported in four days, whereas it would have taken twice that time under normal conditions; at the same time a salutary lesson was inculcated, and the question as to who was master was settled once for all. When at length the little *Constance* once more faced the current, every one had settled down into the old groove. The boys were in better spirits, and it was evident they had accepted the situation and were no longer victims to an imaginary discontent. For myself, I no longer feared desertion as I had done almost daily for the past few weeks. Had these boys been mildly reprimanded and merely warned not to repeat their offence, I am convinced a second attempt to get away would have occurred within a week. The African has but little respect for words, and at least he must know that exceptional circumstances will be met by exceptional measures.

The river, which now showed signs of rising, was still difficult of navigation, owing to the swiftness of the current, and it was only by taking full advantage of back washes and resorting to the frequent use of the tow-rope that any progress was made during the first few days following the continuance of the journey. Two and a half miles from the point of departure we were checked by the Kaiungwa Rapids. Here an impassable barrier of rock extends from the left bank to an island in midstream, and between this and the right bank is a narrow channel, at that time very shallow. About three hundred yards upstream a gravel bank stretches in an oblique direction from the right to within a few yards of the left bank, and through this narrow space the bulk of the river passes with considerable swiftness. Such gravel banks are characteristic of this section of the Zambezi at low water, but after the first few weeks of rain they must be completely submerged by the rising stream.

A short description of our passage through these rapids does not seem to me to be superfluous, as this is eminently representative of many similar experiences with a detailed description of which no useful purpose would be served. Accounts of so many incidents similar in character would add to the monotony of this work, and would waste alike the writer's time and the printer's ink.

To assist the description I supply a diagram of the rapids. We were steaming along the south bank when we first met the full force of the current. Unable to make headway, we crossed the river, and in doing so were washed two hundred yards downstream before gaining the protection of the opposite bank. There, under lee of a small rocky promontory, we moored to the bank until full steam pressure could be accumulated. Thrice we attempted to round this promontory, but each time could do no more than hold our own for a space, only to be driven back as the steam indicator receded. Towing was out of the question on account of the nature of the bank. Every few minutes gentle gusts of wind passed upstream, but so far none had filled the sail at the psychological moment. A mere cupful of wind was required to turn the balance in our favour. At length, just as the launch was beginning to fall away in another attempt to rush the current, a slight breeze filled her sail. The tables were turned in an instant. From holding her own, the little boat made inch after inch, until at length the point was weathered and we were able to seek a respite in a slacker current. Another three hundred yards brought us face to face with insurmountable obstacles, so far as any passage by the north bank was concerned. The situation was at first puzzling, for a current quite three knots quicker than our best speed intervened between ourselves and the sand island in midstream which now stood on a level with us. One possible course seemed open to us. The subsidiary stream passing round the far side of the island did not unite with the main stream until the two were forced into parallel lines. Thus for about one hundred yards the conflicting currents might be expected to some extent to

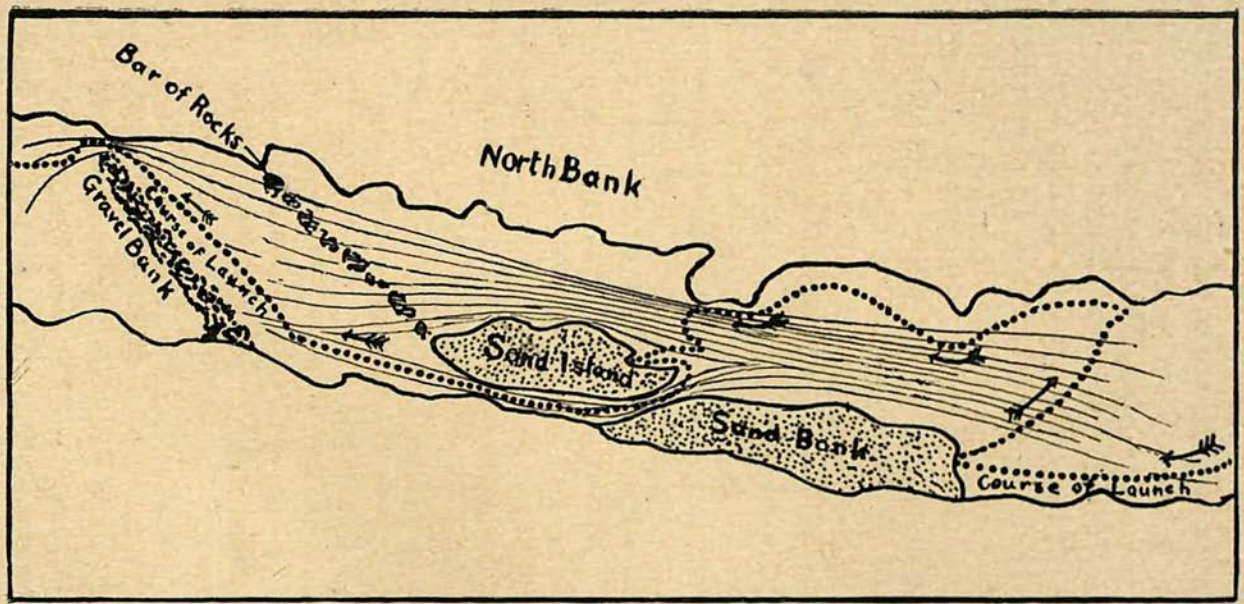


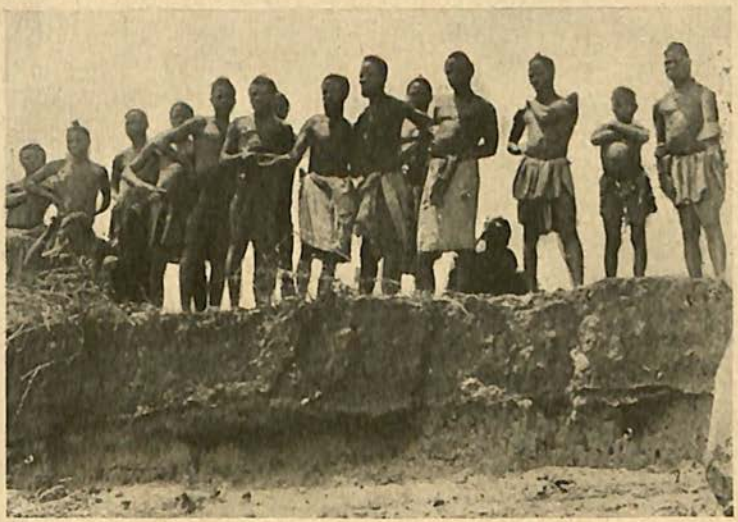
Diagram of the Kaiungwa Rapids

neutralise the effect of one another, and if this so far served to reduce the force of the stream as to give us a fair way, we could make the back wash caused by the first impact of the two streams, and by this means reach the island. With every pound pressure of steam the little boiler was capable of generating, we rushed the main river with the anticipated result. Though carried down about one hundred yards, we yet succeeded in striking the line of little whirling eddies and eccentric currents separating the two streams, and along this we were relieved to find ourselves making slow but steady headway. When at last we entered the back wash, we were forced forward with such impetus that had not Captains Quicke and Hamilton made instant use of the poles we carried for such emergencies, the bows must have been stove in against a great rock, which, even as it was, brought us to a rude standstill. We were at last clear of difficulties, for the stream separating the island from the south bank, though swift, was so shallow that the boat could be helped forward by boys wading knee-deep; and by the time deep water was reached, it was found to be so effectually held up by the rocky bar below, and on the other side so adequately protected by the shingle bank from any great flow of water from above, that in recrossing the river the little boat was left complete mistress of the situation, and with the assistance of the tow-rope soon floated in a charming reach, along which she steamed several miles before daylight showed signs of waning.

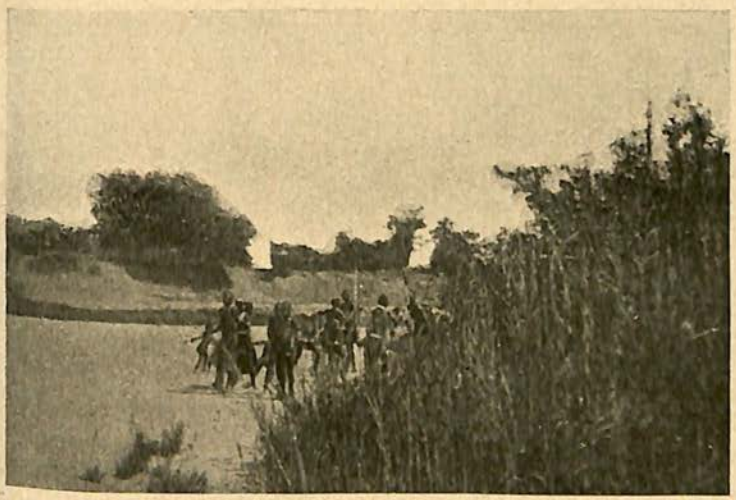
The succeeding three days were spent in travelling up a river of varying characteristics, the banks being for the most part high, sometimes sloping to the water's edge, sometimes cut clean by the action of the floods. The contiguous country was wooded, and the soil too poor to grow rich herbage. There was a fair sprinkling of game in these parts, so that we experienced no difficulty in filling the flesh-pots. On one occasion I caught a glimpse of a lioness gliding through the long grass bordering a dry watercourse, but she did not give a chance of a shot, and an attempt to track

her to the open proved abortive. The country was more densely populated than hitherto, and the people were disposed to be friendly. The sub-tribe to which they belonged was known as Nangilila, which apparently has nothing in common with that to which the natives inhabiting the Kariba Gorge belong.

On the 26th we reached the Kansala Rapids, the position of which, on the existing maps, requires considerable amendment. These rapids are almost a counterpart of the Kaiungwa Rapids. Each has its island, its gravel bank, and its bar of rocks, though the latter, in the case of Kansala, extends from the island to the south, instead of to the north bank. It cost us two days of hard work to pass these rapids, but when once clear, no difficulties were encountered for several days, and satisfactory progress was made against a much slacker current than we had been used to for some time past. We were now well within the borders of the Batonga country. We found these people highly demonstrative, and the keen interest they took in the strange boat which glided through the water without apparent human aid was quite entertaining. Oftentimes they would exhibit their curiosity by a score of questions, more or less of an intelligent nature. It had been interesting to note the different moods in which this or that tribe watched the progress of the largest and most mysterious craft on which their eyes had ever rested. Some, as in the case of these Batonga, would try to solve the mystery amongst themselves, and failing to arrive at any definite conclusion, would appeal to me to explain the why and the wherefore of the mysterious phenomenon. Others, especially their women and children, would run along the river banks singing and laughing and dancing until the shrill music of the whistle placed an unlooked-for limit to their mirth, and caused a precipitous and uniform flight. Others, again, would sit motionless on the banks and watch the strange sight coming and going without betraying the remotest sign of emotion or apparent curiosity. Oddly enough, this was the vein in which their first cousin, the baboon, received us on more than



Watching the Steamer from the River Bank



Natives Scared by the Sound of the Siren

one occasion. The same nonchalant air of indifference was noticeable in the one case as in the other; each sat in single line on some bank commanding a river view, and from a moderate distance there was no discernible difference in shape, colour, or posture between the representatives of these two sections of animate beings. This striking similitude would deceive both white men and black.

"There are people in front, sir."

And later, when the "people" retired on all-fours, a score of black faces would grin from ear to ear, and enjoy a joke at the expense of their own race.

On the 7th of December, after passing the Zongwe confluence, we entered the Lutala Gorge — another of those beautiful mountain passes which supply a characteristic feature to the Middle Zambezi. The river here is somewhat wider and the hills less lofty than is the case with the Kariba and Lupata gorges, but the scenery is nevertheless extremely picturesque, and, in fact, the view from our camp the following morning, immediately before and during sunrise, made a vivid impression on my mind. We were encamped on a small, sandy plateau twenty feet above the Zambezi. In front the mirror-like surface of the river yielded a perfect reflection of the opposite hills, clothed as they were in the bright variegated tints of early spring. Reality and its reflection were relieved by a dividing line of bright yellow sand and straw-coloured reeds tipped with green, likewise doubled by the smooth glass-like stream. As the sun rose, the reflective functions of the water declined, but the richly clad hills, though no longer enhanced by their own reflected beauty in the foreground, still produced a landscape distinguished by grace of outline and brilliancy in colouring. Behind, a steep, semicircular hill, the strata of which, horizontal and regular, formed huge, step-like terraces rising one beyond the other to the very summit, was strikingly suggestive of a mighty amphitheatre in ruins. To the left a sudden bend from the south obscured the river behind its steep, hilly banks, while to the left a similar bend cut off the river view

and placed in the foreground a broad band of bright yellow sand. We were surrounded on all sides by forest-clad mountains, and in this was enclosed all that is essential to a perfect landscape. Looking to the north, the south, the east, or the west — everywhere Nature was to be seen at her best. I longed to spend a couple of days in this little earthly paradise, but it was absolutely necessary to press forward — and here the traveller with definite aims loses much of the pleasure of his experience. Had I always cried a halt in response to the demands of simple inclination, I should still have been somewhere in the middle of Africa, or have returned home defeated. Perpetual movement, day after day, week after week, and month after month, seems gradually to become an essential of life — a second nature. Occasionally I have planned out a day of rest while on the march, but I can scarcely remember such an occasion on which the spirit of movement had not overtaken me before daylight was six hours old, and then there has been nothing for it but to pack up and forge ahead.

After steaming up twenty-five miles of very navigable river — water deep and current slack — we passed through two small gorges separated by but a short distance from one another. The first was noticeable on account of flat platforms of rock, the perpendicular walls of which rose on either side of the river so short a distance apart as to suggest admirable bases for a bridge from bank to bank. So far as I could gather from the natives of a village, near which we camped that evening, this gorge is known by the name of Pasoma. The second one was distinguished by the beauty of its scenery, a more than ordinarily winding stream, and a lofty hill which rose abruptly from the river-bed at the western entrance to the pass, dividing the stream into two narrow swift branches which cut it off from the mainland on all sides. Had this been the Rhine instead of an African river, one would have expected to see the summit of this natural fortress crowned with the ruins of a mediæval castle. We had some little difficulty in bringing the launch through this very



In the Lutala Gorge

swift current, but with the aid of time and the tow-rope were able to camp at sunset well clear of all immediate obstacles to further progress.

We had steamed two or three miles next morning under the most favourable circumstances, when a white man's camp was sighted on high ground rising from the north bank.

It transpired that within the last few weeks a small detachment of the South African Company's police had crossed the river and established a station at Monze's, a native centre situate on the Matoka Plateau, about a week's march to the north. The small camp on the hill was a forwarding station, under the charge of a police corporal, a young English gentleman not long from Eton, who, like so many others, had been attracted to South Africa in search of prospects, adventure, novelty, or fortune. From him we received news of the battle of Omdurman, the still unsettled differences between Great Britain and France in the matter so well known as the Fashoda incident, and the cowardly assassination of the Empress of Austria. In the afternoon we steamed a few miles farther upstream, and took with us young Mr. Hare, who did not seem averse to the prospect of dining and sleeping a few miles from his lonely home.

That evening the boy Presenti — he who had elected to remain with his sick "brother" on the occasion of the attempted desertion — was bitten on the foot by a snake, though fortunately the reptile was of a non-poisonous species. Still, the boy did not know this, and quite pardonably persuaded himself that his hours were numbered. Working himself into a paroxysm of fear, he made up his mind to give up his ghost under protest. Brandy was administered, and he howled, and writhed, and imprecated his distant mother, until he had so far exhausted himself as to fall asleep; but as none of the symptoms of snake poisoning had developed, it was evident he would wake up in the morning to find his mortal coil still unshuffled. And so he did, nor was he any the worse for his night of anguish.

The next day's journey was something in the nature of a

royal progress. The country was thickly populated, and the inhabitants turned out in their numbers and trotted along the banks until they could trot no longer. The ladies, as usual, were more noisy and demonstrative than the men. Most of these were ornamented with beads to an extent I have not witnessed before or since.

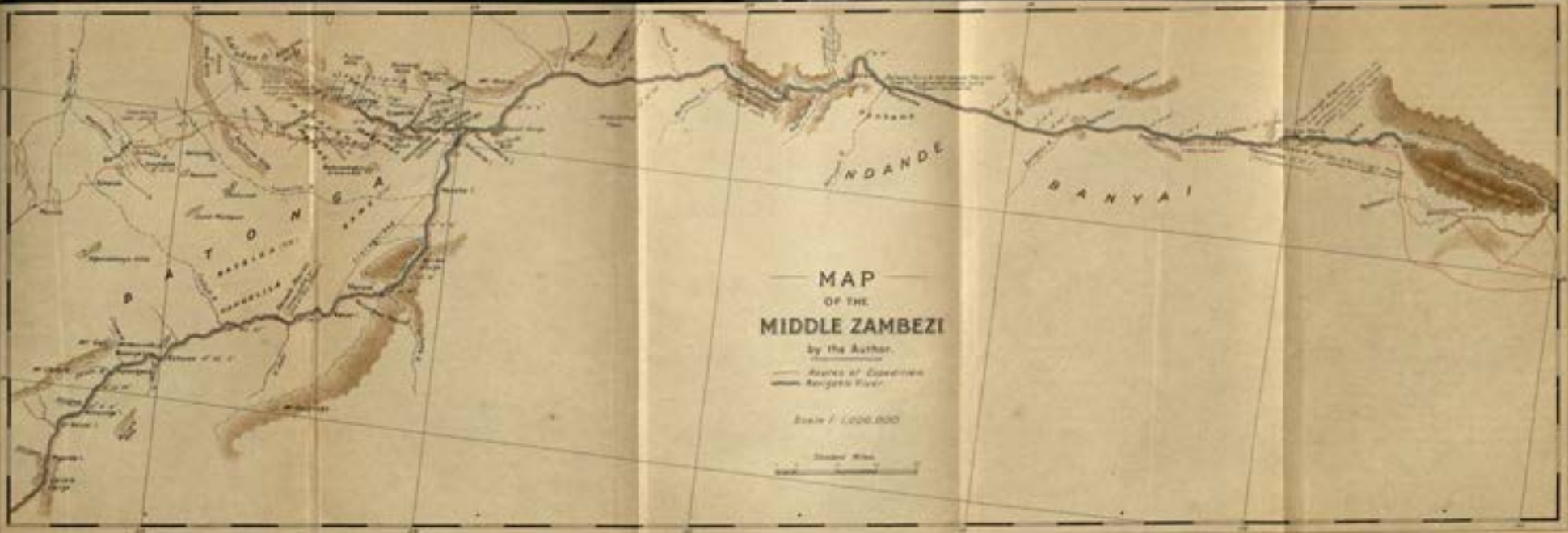
An incident which occurred that afternoon caused considerable amusement to all but one, and that one was an old white-headed man who hailed us from the shore, and from what could be heard was endeavouring to give some information about some white man. As we steamed to the bank, the better to understand him, the boat grounded on the stony bed. I had long since learned that when once my black crew had settled down to a condition of sleepy lassitude, an order to take to the water and dislodge the boat from a sandbank or hidden rock must be given in no uncertain tone, if it was to be obeyed with anything like precision. Therefore it was possibly not in the mildest of voices that I ordered the boys into the water on this occasion. The result was a loud roar of laughter, and as I turned to ascertain the cause of this explosion of merriment, the old man was to be seen running up the hill with the nimbleness begotten of terror. To reassure him of our good intentions was impossible; he would give no opportunity for explanation, for he neither halted, turned his head, nor relaxed his speed until lost to sight beyond the brow of the hill. The river was now deep and navigable, but in face of a strong current little progress was made during the next three days. A straight range of hills known as Malundu runs parallel with the mean course of the river for about twenty-five miles. This range which lies to the east has forced the river into a northeasterly course, though apparently not without active but ineffective protest. Time after time the stream strikes the very base of the hills and is hurled back again in an almost opposite direction, only to describe a semicircular course for a mile or two, and then renew its effort to force a passage through the opposing barrier. The result is the bed is excessively tortuous, and

the river journey has a great disadvantage in point of distance over the land route.

On the 13th of December we arrived at the foot of the first of a series of dangerous rapids which may be taken as the western terminus of the navigable stretch of the Middle Zambezi which extends for eight hundred miles from the Kebrabasa Rapids into the interior of the continent. We had now followed the course of the river from the sea for a distance of twelve hundred miles. Although occasional difficulties had been encountered and much hard work endured, these were mainly attributable to the fact that the passage had been undertaken at the driest and consequently most difficult season of the year for purposes of navigation. As a test of the possibilities of the river as a waterway, perhaps this was as it should be.

The rivers of Africa vary in volume perhaps more than do those of any other continent. What in the dry season is a mere waterless bed, becomes a surging torrent during the rains, and in like manner an insignificant stream swells into a large river. By the marks on the rocks and banks we made an estimate of the height to which the river rises during the floods. In some of the narrow gorges the high-water line stood some forty or fifty feet above our heads as we steamed through these rock-bound mountain passes. With ordinary care in navigation it is obvious that during the greater part of the year an eight- or ten-knot steamer could pass up and down the river from Kebrabasa to the point we had now reached without encountering difficulty or danger. During the floods the bars which create the Chansenga, Kakolore, Kaiungwa, Kansala, and many smaller rapids are completely submerged by several feet of water, and the dangerous obstacles encountered by us in some of the gorges are covered by nearly as many fathoms. The maximum force of the current, too, must be reduced in those places where it is considerable at low water. The water of the Zambezi is held up at intervals by bars and rocks rising to the surface, as is that of the Thames by artificial lock and weir. The consequent result is

a considerable reduction of current above the obstruction and a whirling torrent through the narrow channels of escape. As the water rises these obstacles are submerged by several feet of water, and unobstructed space is allowed from bank to bank for the flow of the river. The force of the current being thus distributed over a considerably extended area, the maximum rate is materially reduced. The half-knot rate in the reach above the "quondam" rapids may be increased to three knots, but the narrow channel with its eight- or ten-knot stream is no longer to be found. No single rapid in the eight hundred miles of river under discussion has more than an inconsiderable fall if considered in conjunction with the three or four hundred yards of water held up by the rocks which create it. I therefore venture to predict that for at least six months in the year steamers will make this passage without encountering any current exceeding five knots per hour, and seldom more than half that rate. This view is to some extent justified by Mr. Weller's experience. During his return journey to Chicoa early in January, though the rains had scarcely begun on the Middle Zambezi, he found that in the Kariba Gorge the water had risen quite twelve feet since our experience there six weeks earlier, and that most of the rapids which had given us so much hard work no longer existed, while the worst had almost disappeared. Thus it may be said that the eastern provinces of Marotseland are connected with the open sea by an idle waterway with but one break of sixty-five miles, — that caused by the Kebrabasa Rapids. Surely this cheapest of all means of communication is, economically speaking, worthy of development. No railway over the two thousand miles separating Cape Town from the Zambezi can ever compete with a natural waterway in the conveyance of heavy goods, except where time is of more value than the goods themselves. Marotseland will shortly be to South Africa what Southern Rhodesia is to-day. Cheap transport is one of the essentials of rapid success in the early development of young countries.


MAP
OF THE
MIDDLE ZAMBEZI
by the Author.
Routes of Expedition
Navigable River
Scale 1 : 1,000,000
Statute Miles
INDANDE
BANYAI

CHAPTER VII

Rough and rocky — Ominous rapids — Molele and Sepanga — Eccentric conduct of fish — An apparent impossibility — Not so bad as it looked — Almost capsized — Difficulties increase — A critical position — Long fight for existence — Strain on the boys — All but wrecked — The last card — A narrow margin — Clear at last — The Devil's Gorge — Dark, dismal, lifeless — The Guay confluence — An everlasting barrier — Nineteen rapids in twenty-one miles — In a whirlpool — The end of the tether — Preparation for a land journey — An inhospitable country — The boys foodless — A dismal prospect — A reconnoitring expedition — Progress under difficulties — A night in the mountains — A troop of baboons — The hungry boys demand Sultan for dinner — Captain Hamilton demurs — The dead baboon — Semi-cannibalism — Half a mile an hour — A curious bed place — Scaling a precipice — The habitation of man once more — Scarcity of food — Near WANKE'S — A village on a hill — Food commandeered — Goods brought forward in relays — Captain Hamilton in blissful solitude — SICHIWENE cataract — *Constance* washed downstream — Desertion of five boys — Christmas Eve in the bush — Mr. Weller indisposed — Farewell to the *Constance*

CHAPTER VII

THE DEVIL'S GORGE

THE rapids now opposed to us were not pleasing to the eyes of the navigators of a small aluminium launch, however deeply they might appeal to the lover of nature. Rough, rocky banks confined the stream which hurried, swift and shallow, over its boulder-strewn bed. Through this the *Constance* was towed for about two thousand yards. Her course was necessarily tortuous, owing to the difficulty in finding a channel both sufficiently deep and free from rocks. The natives referred to these rapids as Molele. Above them, and separated by a mile and a half of quiet water, are the Sepanga Rapids, which keep the water in a state of ferment for the space of a mile. Neither of these, nor in fact the majority of the rapids previously discussed, are to be found in existing maps.

Late in the evening, after a very hard day's work, we camped above Sepanga. While skirting the reeds between the rapids two nice fish, each weighing about a couple of pounds, came to bag in an unusual manner. Disturbed no doubt by the action of the propeller they leapt three or four feet into the air from the narrow space between the launch and the reeds, and falling in the boat were instantly secured.

The next day, after proceeding up a reach of calm water for a couple of miles, we found ourselves face to face with yet another rapid. It looked more severe than any we had encountered, and in fact appeared to be quite unnegotiable, but in reality was passed with comparative ease. First we towed over a gravel bar, which, to a great extent, held up the water falling over a rocky barrier which rose two feet above

the level of the water below it. This lay about three hundred yards from the gravel bank, and appeared to reach from bank to bank. As the river came over the rocks, it threw up a long line of white foam, the main current passing under the surface water and reappearing thirty yards farther down. We passed up the left bank without difficulty and found ourselves in this band of still water immediately below the fall. Finding no possible opening near the left bank we steamed slowly across the river within a few yards of the two-foot fall on the one side, and a violent torrent which sprang as it were from the depths of the river on the other. It transpired that a considerable volume of water rushed through a narrow opening immediately under the right bank. The current from this, of course, remained on the surface and sped along at a rate far too great to allow the remotest hope of making headway against it. However, at the farther side was a back wash which ran up the bank until it met the stream as it dashed through the narrow opening. To reach the back wash would be to reach the bank, from which we might be able to tow the boat above the rapid. Turning on full steam ahead we rushed the current, and although carried with it for about twenty yards, we managed to get into the back wash. The pace of this proved to be considerable, for by the time the boat came to a standstill she was three parts above the crest of the rapid, was speedily made fast to vegetation on the bank and gradually drawn into safe water beyond.

Another mile of peace, and then came another rapid, formed by the passage of the river over and between a great chaos of huge boulders. On one of these we were washed broadside on, and were within an ace of being capsized. Fortunately the water was not too deep to allow of off-loading, so everything was carried ashore and the empty boat hauled through without mishap. These rapids seemed interminable, but I felt we must be nearing Wanke's, or Zonke's, as it should be written, which was as near the Victoria Falls as I expected to be able to take the steamer. There was no



Purchasing Corn



Lunch on the Zambezi

other course than to plod onwards, feeling that every mile reduced the distance separating ourselves from Wanke's village, where I expected to be able to engage porters to carry us to Marotseland. The country we were then in was quite uninhabited.

On the ensuing day the *Constance* was at the foot of what I believe to be the most dangerous rapid she encountered during the whole of her voyage.

The Zambezi, barren, dismal, and rock-bound, surged and roared amongst dark, dangerous-looking boulders, which, save for a single swift, narrow stream in the middle of the river, seemed to extend with ominous irregularity from bank to bank, and for over two hundred yards upstream. To us the central stream was useless, as there was no bank from which to tow. There, however, appeared to be a narrow, deep, and tortuous channel twenty yards from the right bank. If we could but keep the launch in her course, we might pass in safety; at all events I resolved to try. With the exception of the pilot all the boys were sent ashore with the rope, and while I remained at the helm, my companions armed themselves with poles, with which to stave the boat off the rocks. Little by little we crept forward, and at last it really appeared that we would be successful. With the helm "hard-a-port" we could barely counteract the effect of the rope, which had now to be worked at a considerable angle to our course. The result was that we gradually edged toward the bank. Even there we should have weathered the rapids had all our dangers been on the surface. But it was not so, for a grating noise told us we were in contact with a submerged rock, and in another moment we were held fast by the rock on the port side with the whole weight of the stream on the starboard beam. The rock lay immediately aft the engines, and we heeled over to such an extent that the current washed our gunwale, occasionally throwing a few pints into the boat. The boys made a plucky effort to dislodge her, but in vain. Gradually the bows came round to the current, and it became obvious that prompt action alone could save the boat and everything in

her from destruction, for were she once swung clear of the rock, she must be smashed to pieces before she drifted twenty yards, for, immediately below, the angry torrent rushed and foamed through a veritable medley of rocks — nothing could live in such a chaos. The loss of the boat meant the wreck of the expedition. I had undertaken work which should be far-reaching in its results, if successfully carried out, but as yet the first sod had not been turned. Further, I was responsible for the lives of three of the best fellows who had ever entered the field of African exploration. If any survived a wreck, he would have to face several hundred miles without food, means, or arms before he could reach civilisation with its blessings and curses — a precarious undertaking! Thoughts and actions succeed one another with inconceivable rapidity in cases of extreme emergency, and a few moments sufficed to pass everything movable into the bows — sixty-pound loads flew from one arm to another as though they scaled as many ounces. But in spite of all, by the time two and one-half tons had been passed forward we were still in the same position, while the continued strain on the boys' hands and arms was beginning to be felt. One ray of hope alone remained. Was the water too deep to allow of a foothold? If so, we might be able to force the bows round and then by swinging her outwards there was some chance that she might drift down the channel through which she had been towed. In a moment Captain Quicke, Mr. Weller, and myself slipped into the water, holding on to the gunwale to prevent our being carried downstream. I was the shortest of the three, and with my five feet nine inches could just reach the bottom with my toes, my chin being under water. I would not allow Captain Hamilton into the water, in spite of his anxiety to give a hand, for being somewhat short in stature he could not have reached the bottom and kept his mouth above water, besides which, he was unable to swim. Stiffening our backs we added all we could to the work of the boys on the rope, and steadily but slowly the bows were forced round to their original position. We were thus able to examine the rock

which held us, and it was found that a lower ledge offered standing room from which it was possible to work a lever. This answered admirably, and by degrees the hull was moved clear of the troublesome rock. The boys pulled with the energy of hope renewed, and as we found the situation saved, we gave vent to our relieved feelings in a ringing cheer, in which the boys on the bank joined lustily. The same afternoon we made eight and one-half miles, and towed through three less severe rapids, reaching the entrance of another gorge, where we camped for the night.

The following day — the 16th of December — was to see the last of our river journey. We soon found that the gorge we had entered was very different in character from those through which we had already passed. The river itself was broken every few hundred yards by rocky bars. Our ears were never free from the everlasting roar of the water as it rushed over these obstructions. It would be difficult to exaggerate the almost death-like dreariness of this sombre mountain pass. The river reflects the dark grey colouring of the perpendicular walls of basalt which confine the stream within a bed only sixty to one hundred feet in width. These impart an inky hue to a water surface disturbed by conflicting currents and whirling eddies. Above, huge, flat-sided boulders are strewn about in confused disorder. In travelling over them — as one or other of us had to on various occasions — it is difficult to do so at a greater rate than one mile per hour. The boulders are surmounted by steep hills seven or eight hundred feet high, covered by forest and tangled undergrowth. No sound is to be heard above the rumbling murmur of the water. Never before had I seen a place which so forcibly reminded me of what some of us are told to expect hereafter, so I named this dismal spot the Devil's Gorge — departing for the first time from the rule of adopting native nomenclature. In this instance, however, the few natives we subsequently fell in with, who were settled near the further extremity of the gorge, had names for some of the rapids, but were unable to provide one for the gorge itself. Living-

stone, who passed some fifty miles to the north, says, in allusion to this pass, "the rent through which the river passes is by native report quite fearful to behold," but so far as I can judge the place is studiously avoided by the black man, and had never been approached by the white man until the *Constance* found her further progress barred after working her way through two-thirds of its most inhospitable precincts. About midway the Guay River joins the parent river through a narrow, rock-bound entrance, and near this a hot spring oozes from the rocky bank.

This last day on the Middle Zambezi proved one of the hardest in our experience. We travelled eight miles, and not a mile passed without our being compelled to appeal to the tow-rope to help us through some bad place. In one instance whilst attempting to force a passage through a rapid with a two-foot drop, the rope snapped and we were carried three hundred yards downstream before we could get away from the full force of the current. At the foot of another we had a narrow escape, when we found ourselves on the outskirts of a whirlpool, in the centre of which nothing could have lived. Full steam, with the helm hard over, did not prevent our being twice carried round in a circle before we could get clear, and in doing so we were hurled against the rocky wall with a considerable shock, though fortunately we were able to break the force of impact with the poles we carried for such purposes. I have not described more fights with these rapids than appear necessary to give a correct impression of this part of the river. Suffice it to say that we passed no less than nineteen rapids during the last twenty-one miles of our course.

We stopped immediately below a very nasty bit of water, and as another white, foaming barrier was to be seen a few hundred yards ahead, I decided to reconnoitre before proceeding farther. I knew the rapids and cataracts which break the river for some miles below the Victoria Falls to be absolutely impossible of ascent. I was also aware that Wanke's principal town stood near the Guay River, the con-

fluence of which was already two miles behind us, so there could be no object in running unnecessary risks for the possible advantage of shortening the land journey by ten or fifteen miles. On the following morning Captain Quicke started early to examine the country in front, whilst we made preparations for an afternoon start, should the two rapids in view prove to be the last obstructions of a serious nature. Part of the cargo was landed, in case it should be thought advisable to pass these two rapids, otherwise the remainder would follow preparatory to the return of the steamer. Late in the afternoon he returned in a very exhausted condition.

"It's no good," he gasped.

"What's no good?" I asked, and he told us that in his opinion progress by land or water was out of the question, and then proceeded to describe a series of rocks and precipices over which it would be impossible for the boys to carry anything. From the top of a high hill he obtained a view of the roughest and most inhospitable of countries extending westwards for forty miles at least. In such a country, he said, no human being could or would live.

This news was not very reassuring, especially since the boys had eaten their last morsel that very day; but a hard training had made me sceptical of prospective difficulties, and I determined to make an effort to get through with part of the loads and fifteen boys. I had never yet been compelled to retrace my steps, and to do so now would be disastrous, for even if the people one hundred miles downstream could be induced to carry the goods forward — which was most improbable — it would as likely as not be months before we reached Marotseland.

Within an hour Hamilton and myself with the fifteen boys and the dog Sultan scrambled up the rocky bed of a mountain torrent, hoping to find the country lying a few miles from the river less difficult to follow. It was rough work, and at times difficult to get along at all, and when darkness set in, we were compelled to encamp among the hills without water.

After two miles of rough work the next morning we reached

the river at the very entrance of the gorge. Mountains had given place to hills, but access to the river was to be gained only here and there, owing to the rocky, precipitous nature of the banks. A troop of baboons scampered off on our approach, and I got a shot at an old fellow as he squatted on a mound to take a farewell look at us.

I imagined he was hit from the manner he jumped into the air before making off, but his tracks showed no blood. Three more shots after the retreating troop failed to secure the meal I had hoped to provide for the hungry boys.

As we sat over our cups of tea, a deputation arrived begging me to hand over Sultan to the tender mercies of the cooking pot. Poor old Sultan, capable of eating as much as half a dozen boys, had necessarily been on very short commons indeed for the past few weeks, during which the boys had often been on half rations. He would not have provided a very plentiful or succulent meal even had Captain Hamilton been disposed to make the sacrifice, which, judging from the short ejaculative response the suggestion called forth, he certainly was not. After a rest we moved forward, Captain Hamilton and myself keeping well ahead in the hope of seeing and shooting something edible. Good fortune led us to within smelling-distance of the baboon I had first fired at, and following up the scent we found him dead with two bullets in him, so that he must have come in for a second shot as he retreated with the troop. Our steps were retraced in order to give the boys an opportunity of perpetrating the crime of semi-cannibalism, and this they did without any compunction, except in the case of Machin, Fernando, and one other, who protested that to eat a baboon was much the same as to eat a man, and they preferred to remain hungry.

By the time the boys had discussed the meat, and the dog they had so recently coveted had consumed the fragments that remained, the journey was renewed. About half a mile an hour was the rate at which we moved. We had to make our way over the most impossible-looking places, and the manner in which the boys got the loads through was simply

marvellous. That night we slept on slabs or ledges of rock, one above the other, selecting our beds wherever we could find a comparatively level surface large enough to hold us. In the morning our work began with a precipice rising abruptly for twenty feet, and only slightly inclining for a further ten feet. Every few feet the strata projected two or three inches, but as they tended slightly downward these offered but a precarious foothold. One boy climbed to the top and others placed themselves at intervals on the face of the precipice. The loads were then passed slowly up until nothing remained below but ourselves and the dog. It was anxious work watching fifty-pound loads being handled by boys clinging like so many flies to the surface of a wall. Every moment I feared to see one of those uppermost fall from his place to the rocky ground below, and when my turn came to make the ascent, though empty-handed, and helped by the boys as I neared the top, I realised that we had been fortunate indeed to surmount this obstacle without any broken heads or limbs. As for Sultan, two tent ropes were attached to him, and he was hauled up like a bag of corn. From here we managed to reach higher and less broken ground, from which, after travelling four miles, our eyes were gladdened by the sight of cornfields some distance to the south. Though the river still flowed through a bed of solid rock, the hills had given place to mere undulations sparsely covered with bush, amongst which the mopani predominates. On reaching the bank opposite the gardens a few shouts brought on the scene a couple of natives, who, after a short parley, undertook to ferry us across. After selecting a camp at which it was proposed that everything should be collected, the tent was pitched beneath a large shady tree.

Shortly, the two natives — father and son — came in with a small offering of corn. Delighted at the opportunity of being able to give the boys a good, if a small, meal, and anxious to encourage the people to bring food for sale, I gave double the value in return. Nigger-like, they complained that I had underpaid them, on which I indignantly upbraided them.

This had a beneficial effect, for after a short absence the elder man returned with a fat goat which he begged me to accept. This time the return present was gratefully and respectfully received. Now that the old gentleman had been converted to an amenable state of mind, I proceeded to pick his brains. He, with his wife, son, and small child, were the sole occupants of the "village." There were two or three other families scattered here and there, but all the young men were working at Buluwayo. Thus there was no hope of raising a caravan in the neighbourhood. Makwa Wanke's town on the Zambezi was but a few miles away. Food was scarce, as last year's corn was nearly consumed, and the new crops were not ripe. Pointing south, he informed me that there was a village with a good store of corn. He and his son would show us a better path than the route we had taken from the steamer, and would help to carry in the loads.

We slept on all this, and in the morning the tents were struck, and we set off to the village where food was said to be procurable, with the intention of pitching camp near it. The younger man guided us to the foot of a hill, described the route to the village, and returned. Probably he did not wish to be caught in the act of foisting the white men on his neighbours. The face of the hill was very steep, but when climbed we found ourselves on a small plateau about a mile in length, and following the path we soon reached two small clusters of huts. The inhabitants, however, refused to sell us food, so I deemed it my duty to search the huts with a view to ascertaining how far I should be justified in purchasing corn under compulsion. The first hut entered contained a large bin of corn, which a man and woman on the wrong side of fifty begged me not to take, insisting that it was all they possessed. If this were true, it was obvious the rightful owners had a prior claim to be considered. On the other hand, I could not allow my boys to starve, especially since, if Sansa, our friend near the river, had spoken the truth, they had food stored away. I decided on a compromise, and took two days' rations for the boys, for which I paid the

old people liberally. Whether their present pleased them or whether they were relieved at not being deprived of all the corn, I cannot say, but at all events they seemed highly gratified with the transaction. As this village did not appear to be the home of plenty, as we had been led to suppose, we considered that on the whole the river afforded a better site of the camp, so retraced our steps to Sansa.

The boys were in luck's way that day, for we had scarcely established ourselves on the river, when a troop of baboons came down to drink at a spot about 350 yards away. I picked out one and fired, but in the general scamper that ensued could not be certain as to the result. A second shot sent one away with a broken shoulder, and as they made off I fired again, but without effect. A few minutes later two or three returned to examine something behind a rock. They were holding a post-mortem on the remains of a deceased comrade, who, as it subsequently transpired, had fallen with a bullet through his head. The body was ferried across the river, and the boys enjoyed a good meal. It was instructive to note how completely circumstances had altered the dispositions of these boys. Two months earlier they were so fastidious that having on one occasion been rationed on mealie cobs, they refused to accept them because they preferred meal (which they did not get!). I suggested to my companions that the time would come when their ideas on the food question would modify, and I venture to think that any day during the past fortnight those rations of mealie cobs would have been very deeply appreciated.

Later, the same afternoon, Captain Hamilton, guided by Sansa, returned to the steamer with all but two of the boys. The route was on the south bank, so that it would be necessary for the steamer to cross the river. It was calculated that with the meagre porterage available seven journeys must be made before everything had been brought in, and by this time the boys would have travelled one hundred miles over the roughest country conceivable, lying between two points little over seven miles apart.

In my loneliness I followed the course of the river, and within a mile of camp encountered a cataract of considerable proportions, which I ultimately learned is known locally as Sichiwene. Here the river drops twelve feet over rock. During the floods the effect of this fall must be very imposing, though at the time of my visit the main stream occupied a comparatively narrow bed, rushing through a neck in two falls, one below the other, and each about six feet in height. This sight satisfied me that we had tested to the utmost limit the navigability of the Middle Zambezi, and that the *Constance* might return, without reason to be ashamed of her performance, as the pioneer steamer of these eight hundred miles of river.

For three days I wandered about in search of game, seeing only a few palla, wounding one, but bagging none. Then, according to arrangement, I set off to meet Captain Hamilton, who should be returning with a relay of loads, after which I purposed repairing to the steamer. I met ten of the boys carrying goods, but their leader was not with them. Something had gone wrong with the steamer, but what the difficulty was I could not make out. Hamilton was still on the river.

Early the ensuing morning I set off with the boys to ascertain what the new difficulty might be. They led me first along a valley where the track was good, then over a hill seven hundred feet high, where it was extremely bad — steep, rough, and encumbered by undergrowth. Once amidst the indescribable chaos of massive rocks, hurled about in confused disorder by the resistless force of a thousand generations of floods, I was guided to my friend's temporary lodging. Looking back from the comfort of an arm-chair, the picture which was revealed to me would seem to be a more appropriate illustration for an old-world legend, than for a matter-of-fact description in a non-sensational book of travels. I found my gallant companion seated among rocks at the entrance of a small cave, and completely surrounded by cooking pots and other chattels. Ten feet below

him the dismal river murmured past to the tune of its own monotonous roar, while to right, left, and rear, the great black boulders of the Devil's Gorge added to the weirdness of this weird resting-place. The one bright feature in the picture lay in its human centrepiece. He seemed perfectly happy and content in his lonely cave.

It transpired that the steamer had made its first crossing from the other bank with success, but on her second journey with the remainder of the goods, the man at the helm neglected to keep her head up, and, as a consequence, when the bows met the full strength of the main current they were forced round and the boat was carried a mile and a half downstream before the bank was made within a few hundred yards of the Guay confluence. Thus, extra labour was added to the porters' lot.

As the boys came in they informed us that five of their number had deserted, having swum the river a short way below the camp at Sansa. Those who remained behind expressed their conviction that they would not get through alive, an opinion which I shared, for they had to pass through many tribes who, however friendly they may be to a white man's caravan, are not always tolerant to unprotected fellow-blacks. With a view to providing for the exigencies of the journey, they had purloined the shirts and other rags of their companions. A few weeks later Mr. Weller ascertained during his return journey that two alone survived when they passed a place still three or four hundred miles from home. Whether or not these shared the fate of their unfortunate fellows I cannot say.

I did not think it necessary or advisable to waste time by giving chase, as their desertion was a matter of small moment at this stage, and merely necessitated the employment of five substitutes for the 140 miles to Kazungula in Marotseland, where I knew I could obtain as much labour as I required.

After seeing Captain Hamilton leave with another relay of loads, I clambered along the bank for over an hour before

reaching the steamer. Both Captain Quicke and Mr. Weller seemed heartily tired of their quarters. Captain Hamilton had expressed his intention of bringing the boys back that evening if possible, but not having come in at 4.30, Captain Quicke and myself started for Sansa, arranging that the other two should follow as soon as possible.

The path — such as it was — took us up a hill eight hundred feet high. A rough, steep climb through the tangled undergrowth made us more than warm by the time we had reached the summit. Here we sat awhile contemplating the wild, rugged scenery by which we were surrounded. To the right the Zambezi's course could be traced as on a map, to the left the Guay wound through a bed equally rough, though hemmed in by smaller hills.

For half an hour we worked our way down the steep, forest-clad slope. The sun had sunk below the hills and no longer served as a guide for our direction. We should have reached the valley running in the rear of the hills by now, but as yet there was no sign of it. At last from a spur of the hill we sighted what we concluded to be the Zambezi, and altered our course accordingly. It was almost dark when we reached the water's edge, when we found we were on the left and not the right bank of the supposed Zambezi, which without doubt must be the Guay. To proceed was now out of the question, so we prepared to bivouac for the night. Fortunately we had between us a small tin of soup, four "cookies," and a little cocoa, and this was our menu for Christmas Eve! The first move was to collect as much wood as possible and make a good fire, for not having brought any boys with us, we were without blankets, and though my companion had a coat, I had no covering other than a shirt and pair of flannel "shorts." After partaking of our frugal repast, we smoked and talked awhile before turning in. For beds we resorted to a "dodge" I had learned in South Africa. The fire was removed to a fresh position, a hole made in the hot sand, and in this Captain Quicke took up his quarters for the night, and voted it a warm and excellent

substitute for the genuine article. After doing likewise for myself we both fell asleep. However, we were not to be allowed to rest in peace, for about midnight a heavy shower of rain aroused us, and in a very short time we were both wet to the skin. Making a roaring fire we sat over it till the rain ceased, and then, after drying shirts and breeches in turn, these articles were replaced, fresh holes were scraped in hot sand, and we both slumbered till daybreak. Since we had no breakfast on which to waste our time, we started at once, first following the course of the Guay for about a mile; then turning away to the right we ultimately struck the right path, and in due course reached camp.

In the afternoon the other two arrived, and we were much amused to find that Captain Hamilton — like ourselves — had lost his bearings in the obscure depths of the mountain forest, slept *en route*, and reached the steamer in the early morning.

Captain Quicke was fortunate enough to shoot a palla, which in a country so lacking in game had almost an artificial value, the more so as it provided fresh meat for our Christmas dinner. Next evening Captain Quicke took away the boys for another relay of loads. The roughness of the country was beginning to tell its tale, for both white men and black were becoming footsore. My own feet were raw in more places than one, so in view of forced marches into Marotse-land for the purpose of engaging porters should Wanke fail us, I decided to rest them as much as possible while the goods were being brought in. Mr. Weller's health caused some anxiety. He seemed to me to be suffering from a severely congested liver, which had given him intermittent trouble for the past month. If I could but get him to the plateau, where he would have regular walking exercise and a cooler, more bracing climate, I felt convinced his health would mend rapidly, but unfortunately it must be some weeks before the steamer could be floated above the Kafukwe cataracts, and in this matter his services were indispensable.

On the 29th of December, accompanied by Mr. Weller and

the boys selected to man the steamer, I paid my last visit to the little *Constance.* In addition I took with me boys sufficient to remove the few loads remaining. After giving him written instructions affecting the conduct of the expedition, and such advice as I trusted would enable him to master his indisposition, I bade farewell and Godspeed to my hard-working, conscientious, and competent young friend. Never once had he allowed what must often have appeared to him most discouraging circumstances to shake his loyalty or mitigate his energies, and this, in spite of the derangement of an organ which is perhaps responsible for more depression and ill temper than all the real troubles of life are capable of conjuring up to the misery and discomfiture of mortal man.

After removing the little "Union Jack" worked for the steamer by my wife, and replacing it with a duplicate, — the much appreciated present of a lady passenger on the *Inyone,* — I scrambled out of the Devil's Gorge for the last time.

The painter connecting the two sections of the expedition was cut, though it was hoped five or six months would see us reunited.

CHAPTER VIII

New Year's Day, '99 — A journey westward — The natives of MAKWA — Taints of civilisation — Start for MAROTSELAND — A labour agent — A rough march — Scarcity of food — A steep ascent — The high veldt climate — Corn at last procurable — The African's power to consume or abstain — The traveller's greatest hardship — KAZUNGULA reached — The home mail — Arrival at SESHEKE — LETIA the king's son — Progress of civilisation — Not an unmixed blessing — Departure of porters for MAKWA arranged — AKANONGISWA — Her capricious treatment of her people — The "royal" cyclist and his suite — Mr. Coryndon's adventure with a lioness — A Kaffir dog — His depredations and tragic end — Hurried journey to LIALUI — Swampy valleys — Main points of interest — Arrival at MONGO — The Residency garden — Vegetables a luxury

CHAPTER VIII

FROM SANSA TO MONGO

On New Year's Day, 1899, I left Sansa with six boys, two only remaining behind to look after Captains Quicke and Hamilton, the manning of the launch having accounted for the rest.

Whether I was to be away for a few days or a few weeks depended entirely on the labour supply at Wanke's. Should this source fail, it was my intention to proceed at once to Kazungula, engage porters there, and bring them back without delay.

Captain Quicke accompanied me as far as Makwa, where we arrived late in the afternoon. Here we found all the visible taints of early intercourse with Buluwayo and the mines — old clothes and shapeless hats had robbed the savage of his primitive comeliness, and converted him into something no more picturesque than a scarecrow, no cleaner than the vagrant of a London slum. That discordant Dutch affirmative "*ja*" was the answer to almost every question, except where price or value was concerned — then it was "one pound" as the wage for carrying a load eighteen miles, or "ten shillings" as the price of a lean, undersized goat. I saw at once that this was no place for me, and an interview next morning with the village chief — a son of old Wanke — quite settled the question. All the young men were working in the mines, and the new crops not being ripe, there was no food to be had — a cheerful spot for a half-starved, stranded caravan! I lost no time in arranging to be ferried to the north bank of the river, and in a few hours parted from Captain Quicke and set my face toward Marotseland. On quitting the river,

which is here comparatively wide, though shallow and broken, we passed over choppy undulations, rough with stones and meagrely sheltered by stunted trees. After marching three miles, we encountered the vanguard of a white man's caravan. These boys insisted that there was no water short of a long day's march in front. More in regard for the approach of the white man than from any instinctive belief in the veracity of my informants, I ordered the tent to be pitched. Shortly a tall, well-made man walked in. He had returned from a trip through Butoka in the capacity of a labour agent, and had engaged a certain number of boys, the majority of whom had given him the slip and returned to their homes. There was water, he said, every few miles along the track, but for the first two days I would pass through a very rough country, almost, if not entirely, uninhabited. He was travelling quickly, and hoped to be in Buluwayo within a fortnight, and kindly undertook to post a letter which I addressed to my wife. I was delighted at the opportunity, for owing to the many delays on the river, no opportunity to send news had occurred for four months, and I feared my long silence might cause anxiety.

The next day we marched twenty-one miles over a rough country, but, after the rocks with which we had been so intimately associated recently, this did not trouble us much. We crossed three streams during the day, and camped for the night on the banks of a small river fifty yards wide, but very shallow.

For two and twenty miles the following day we ascended rapidly. A few pumpkins — the only foodstuff procurable at Makwa — had been finished on the previous evening, but we had the good fortune to reach a small village just before sunset, where a scanty meal of corn was procured for the boys.

We had ascended nearly two thousand feet within forty-eight hours. The muggy, mosquito-pestered nights were left behind, and we slept in a cool, clear atmosphere under every available blanket. What a different climate these two short days had brought us! Fresh vigour was infused into the system, and the spirits rose with the rising altitude. So

sudden an ascent from twenty-five hundred to well over four thousand feet above the sea level emphasises in the mind of the traveller the great advantages of altitude in a tropical country. A long and varied experience has persuaded me that the climate of Africa is far from being as black as it is painted, while many of the uplands are among the healthiest tracts of the habitable globe. The plateaux in the interior are, I feel convinced, destined to be peopled by an active and vigorous white race. With the introduction of habitable houses, good diet, and other comforts of civilisation, less will be heard of the deadliness of the African climate, and erelong fever and dysentery will cease to exist in an acute form.

Two more days of hard marching brought us to another village where a small quantity of corn was purchased, and thenceforward I had no difficulty in serving out full rations to the boys. I know of no greater source of anxiety to the traveller than this food question. To be compelled to march the boys day after day on little or no food without any apparent prospect of being able to ameliorate their condition is painful, to say the least of it. Fortunately, the African is so constituted as to be able to travel long distances on very little nourishment, just as with corresponding equanimity he can survive the other extreme with praiseworthy fortitude. When eatables are plentiful he can put away in twenty-four hours as much food as will satisfy a ravenous white man for a week, and that apparently without inconvenience to his unseen organs.

We had now quitted the rough ascent to the great Matoka Plateau and were travelling along a good path through pleasant, open forest. As we progressed, villages, though never plentiful, became more frequent, and goats, corn, and occasionally milk exercised a salutary influence on the spirits of the boys.

On the evening of the 8th we struck my old route of '96, and I knew that we should march into Kazungula the following day. I had received no news from my wife since parting from her at Durban six months previously, and since then she had made her return voyage. I was therefore naturally more

than anxious to receive the mail which I hoped was awaiting my arrival on the morrow. This severance of communication with home for long and uncertain periods is to my mind the most trying of the so-called hardships and deprivations incidental to African travel. Use teaches the explorer to meet and, to a large extent, to ignore the worries and discomforts inseparable from wanderings in uncivilised countries, and these are more than counterbalanced by the many surrounding interests, and the spirit of freedom which permeates the very atmosphere of nature's unvandalised domain. What is known and seen and felt breeds far less anxiety than does the mind's speculation on unknown possibilities beyond the scope of control. We were off early the next morning, as we had a twenty-seven mile march to do, the last twenty-one without water. I therefore broke the journey at a stream six miles on, breakfasted, and accompanied by Fernando did the final twenty-one miles into Kazungula without a halt, leaving the rest of the boys to follow at their leisure. Shortly after two o'clock I was at the mission station, and here I found Monsieur Coisson of the Paris (Protestant) Missionary Society, who with his wife had recently arrived from Europe. As I expected, my mail was in his possession, and finding all well at home, both mind and body were given over to rest for the afternoon.

I found that Letia, the Marotse king's son and heir who governs the eastern provinces in his father's name, had removed his headquarters to Sesheke since my previous visit; so on the following evening I left for that place, arriving at midday on the 13th. The boys were no less glad than their master of the chance of a few days' rest. We had averaged twenty miles daily, and this hard marching under sixty-pound loads, following as it did on the rough experience of the Devil's Gorge, had knocked their feet about to some extent. At Sesheke I found Monsieur (and Madame) Louis Jalla, formerly missionary at Kazungula. He had succeeded my old friend Monsieur Goy, who died shortly after my return to England in '96.



Mr. R. T. Coryndon

From Monsieur Jalla I learned the local news, and interesting it was to note the changes which had occurred within the short space of three years.

The eastern section of the country, which was practically a *terra incognita* before I was guilty of producing a map of it, had been penetrated in all directions by prospectors and traders, and in fact the second sod in imperial development was already being turned. My friend Mr. R. T. Coryndon, then British Agent and now administrator of North Western Rhodesia, had founded stations at Kalomo, Monze, Kazungula, and Mongo (near Lialui, the king's town), and had, I was pleased to hear, established his influence in the country; the missionary staff was also about to be doubled. Amidst all this, the natives of Sesheke — the centre toward which all white men entering the country gravitated — showed signs of falling from the simple estate of unsophisticated barbarism in which I had known them. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," and nowhere does this danger take a more pungent form than in the first stages of the transition of man from savagery to civilisation, especially where the lower orders of the people in question are concerned. Lewanika, his son Letia, the royal family, and many of the chiefs of the country have proved themselves praiseworthy exceptions to this rule. Possibly the elements of refinement and self-respect which exist even in a barbarian aristocracy, render it amenable to the influence of a higher order of civilisation, whereas the craven victims of a humiliating serfdom contain no such germs, and must necessarily commence to climb the ladder from the lowest strand.

Letia received me well, and at once undertook to despatch seventy porters under two chiefs to escort my colleagues from their lonely home at Makwa. He also despatched a special messenger to Lialui, bearing letters from me to the king and Mr. Coryndon.

As the two chiefs could not go to Makwa direct, but had to collect porters from various Matoka villages, and as I had sufficient confidence in their master to satisfy me that he

would not tolerate any contraversion of orders in this matter, I abandoned my intention of returning to Makwa myself, not feeling that this extra four hundred miles' tramping could contribute toward the success of the relief caravan. In the meantime I would endeavour so far to arrange matters with Lewanika as to be prepared to commence the special work undertaken by the expedition as soon as my friends put in an appearance. Sesheke was now the headquarters of two governing chieftainships — that of the Mokwai (Princess) Akanongiswa, who rules the southwestern, and of Letia, the ruler of the southeastern province, the latter having a limited power of control over the official actions of his comely but capricious cousin.

Akanongiswa has inherited much of the character of her mother, the Mokwai of Nalolo, Lewanika's eldest sister, whose doings are described in "Exploration and Hunting in Central Africa." Pleasant in address, friendly and accommodating to those in whose favour she is predisposed, she has on many occasions proved herself vindictive and unscrupulous in her dealings with those with whom she is not in sympathy, or whose existence has not been convenient to her. Since my earlier sojourns in her town the following tragedies had been ordered or instigated by this capricious young person.

Ratau, an excellent and popular old chief, who as head of the "kothla" (council) occupied a position in the province only second to that of his mistress, had incurred her displeasure, less on account of his popularity than by the courageous manner in which he was wont to express views more liberal and tolerant than her own. The old man was found dead in his hut one morning, and the cause of death was strangulation. Lewanika, on hearing of this outrage, was more than angry, and demanded an explanation. Of course she denied complicity, and of course no one believed in her innocence. She was severely admonished and given to understand that the recurrence of such a crime within her jurisdiction would entail her removal from power.

This same summary method of dismissal from the mortal

sphere was also practised on three young women of her household, whose charms she suspected to have been exerted on her handsome young husband. But these were her slaves, and were just as much her property as were her flocks and herds—their lives belonged to her and were at her disposal. Nevertheless, Lewanika, on hearing of this second outrage, once more censured his guilty niece, and laid down the rule that in future, rights or no rights, slaves or freemen, the lives of his people must be respected.

A novel and amusing sight which occasionally meets the gaze of the visitor at Sesheke is evolved from the possession by Letia of a bicycle. As in more civilised countries, so in Marotseland, the scions of the royal house are shadowed by a responsible suite. The chief on duty is directly answerable to the king for any hurt or accident which may befall his eminent protégé, and the fact of his not being present at the moment of misfortune cannot be pleaded as an extenuating circumstance, much less as a claim to exoneration. A case in point occurred a few weeks earlier, when Mr. Coryndon had a narrow escape from a lioness. The brute having sprung on his horse's quarters, the administrator escaped serious if not fatal injury, by throwing himself forward in the saddle, and in another moment horse, rider, and lioness were sprawling in different directions. The first recovered his footing and galloped away, the last retired slowly, without deigning to notice the representative of British interests in this part of the world. Fortunately Mr. Coryndon sustained no greater injury than the rending of both boots, and flesh scars on the feet which he still carries with him. The fact of his having intentionally left the chief appointed to look after him in camp, which was three miles away, did not spare that worthy the severe displeasure of his king. It so happened that the chief in question was none other than the husband of the young princess Akanongiswa, but in spite of his connection with the royal house, it was Mr. Coryndon's intercession alone that saved him from serious trouble. But to return to the precincts of Sesheke. Letia has a bicycle,

he also has his suite — his A.D.C.'s, equerries, and so forth, called by different names, no doubt, but in a comparative sense victims to the same privileges and responsibilities as are those who attend the sons of kings in Europe. Now to see a black man neatly attired in European costume and riding a bicycle is not in itself very extraordinary, but to see that same man of colour gliding along under a hot sun at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour, unaffected by either heat or exertion, and then to glance from him to his sweating retinue, middle-aged men, members of the aristocracy of the country, puffing and blowing and panting in the dusty wake of the royal bicycle in their praiseworthy and successful effort to do their duty, produces an effect at once novel and comical.

One of the luxuries attainable at Sesheke is "thick milk." Mixed with a little of the fresh article and a sprinkling of sugar, this makes a very palatable meal, and seems to supply the waste of fatty matter consequent on hard travelling in a hot country. One of the curses of the African village is the native dog. The poor brute must find his own living or die of starvation, and as this is no easy task in a country where man eats the very entrails of an ox and does not look with fastidious eyes on the flesh of naturally deceased animals, it can be imagined that these poor curs are forced to exert all the ingenuity of canine sagacity in order to provide for themselves the most frugal repast. In this they are extraordinarily expert, and often achieve truly remarkable results.

An aluminium vessel, with a lid fitting so tightly that it was not easily removed by a pair of human hands, held some ten pounds of curdled milk, and stood at the entrance of my open tent. On the second morning after my arrival I arose to find that the lid had been cleverly "nosed" from the vessel. This could not have been done from one side only, or the lid would never have been removed — it must have been slightly raised in one place, then at the opposite side, and so on until the object was attained. As for the milk, so effectually had it been cleaned up, that no evidence of its previous existence

remained. I felt sure that, encouraged by such unqualified success, nothing short of the full penalty would deter this four-legged pillager from persecuting me nightly, so I made plans to encompass his destruction. On the one hand, it is difficult not to pity these wretched, half-starved brutes; on the other, it is impossible to feel toward them as one does for the affectionate and highly respectable British dog. The sly visage, staring coat, and general air of unsavouriness suggest a justification for the Eastern cognomen "unclean" as applied to the dog. Let the man who knows them imagine himself patting or caressing a Kaffir dog. Ugh! How the idea makes one shudder!

That evening, favoured by the silvery brilliance of an African moon, I sat within the darkened recesses of my tent with a loaded Mauser laid across my knees. All was quiet — there was not a breath of wind to disturb the solemn calm of night. Suddenly what might have been a phantom dog appeared ten yards from the tent. He was motionless for a moment or two, in order to satisfy himself that the white man slept. His instinct could not penetrate the meshes of the mosquito curtain which concealed the victim of his thievish designs, and he glided forward to within a few inches of the aluminium vessel of blessed memory. With the muzzle of the rifle I raised the curtain, then came the sharp report of the Mauser, followed by a yap and the speedy retreat of the enemy for a few yards. His fellows in the village recognised the death-cry, and wailed forth a chorus of lamentation.

"Inja Shuele," said Machin, and in a few moments the remains were thrown to the crocodiles. Evidently there spread through the canine community of Sesheke the opinion that the white man was a dangerous person with whom to take liberties, for during the remainder of my stay the dogs treated my camp as "out of bounds." Three days of absolute laziness were followed by three days of cartography, during which I prepared my maps up to date. This over, the spirit of movement seized me, and I conceived the idea of making a hurried journey to Lialui, with a view to per-

sonally arranging our future plans with Lewanika. The next morning — January 25 — I left Sesheke with my six boys, and two extra ones provided by Letia. I chose a route lying between my previous ones to and from Lialui — that is, between the Zambezi on the one side and the watershed of its northern affluents on the other. By crossing these midway between source and confluence with the parent river, I hoped to substitute fixed for assumed positions as well as to add detail to my previous work.

There was nothing special in the way of incident to call for a detailed description of this journey, so I merely give a summary account of the main points connected with it. The country is characteristic of the basin of the Upper Zambezi. A succession of white, sandy undulations, covered with a pleasant class of deciduous trees attaining a height of forty or fifty feet, are occasionally separated by rivers and streams flowing along flat, grassy, alluvial valleys. These vary in width between a hundred and a thousand yards. The rivers themselves run through narrow, deep-cut beds, and, unlike those of South Africa, flow throughout the year, overflowing their banks and inundating the valleys as the wet season progresses. As the water drains off, a few weeks after the cessation of the rains, it leaves an excellent pasturage, which retains much of its succulence to the end of the dry season. This is capable of sustaining vast herds of cattle, and should prove a source of wealth in the future. In South Africa the cattle invariably fall off toward the closing months of the dry season, — the parched, seedless "veldt" on which they graze would not keep an English bullock alive; but here in Marotseland the condition of cattle is good throughout the year.

To cross the larger rivers was no pleasant task. Although the wet season was now nearly three months old, very little rain had fallen as yet in these latitudes, though probably the fall had been greater in the north, for the valleys were already inundated. This meant crossing bogs and wading through water at depths varying to four feet, and in the

midst of all this everything had to be ferried across the deep main stream in rickety little canoes, seldom more than twelve inches wide. The Lui, which was the last river to cross, was also the worst. We were compelled to wind about the swamps for quite two miles, in order to avoid depressions where the water would be overhead. At one place where we were immersed as high as the shoulders, a disturbed crocodile darted between two of the boys, who were only a few feet apart. All together, half a day was taken up in getting across this river and its swampy valley.

In crossing the Njoko I traversed my '95 route down the course of that river, and had the gratification of corroborating my previous work both in longitude and latitude, while it was only necessary to make a trifling alteration in the assumed course of the Lumbi and the Lui to bring these rivers into their actual position on the map.

During the latter two or three days of the journey we encountered some half-dozen shallow basins, each containing a "pan" of permanent water. The basins themselves are treeless and covered with grass, and become swampy toward the centre during the rains. The first one reached was Nanjekwa Pan, which, according to the natives, supplies the source of a small, sluggish river known as the Roandwe, which takes a circuitous route for forty-five miles until it enters a similar pan known by the same name as the river that feeds it. I visited Roandwe in '95. At the end of the wet season this is a lake about two miles across. It lies in the high ground bordering the great plain of Burotse, into which its waters soak subterraneously, until at the close of the dry season a mere pond remains behind.

The whole journey of 229 miles was accomplished in ten days. We were particularly fortunate in the weather, only experiencing two short, sharp showers during the whole march.

In the early morning of February 4 we reached Mr. Coryndon's station of Mongo, which stands on the high ground about seven miles from Lialui. Here I found Mr.

Worthington, private secretary to the administrator, and Mr. Aitken, another member of his staff. I was disappointed on learning that Mr. Coryndon had left Mongo only the day before, in order to meet me at Sesheke. As he had taken the river route, there was no possibility of intercepting him, as he would already be sixty or seventy miles on his journey.

A letter in which I reported my arrival and conveyed my greetings to "Lewanika his family, chiefs, and people," was despatched to Lialui at once, and with it a request that he would send a canoe to convey me over the inundated plain, in order that I might be able to greet him in person the following day.

The garden at the residency showed to what advantage this white sandy soil can be turned. The station stands seventy feet above the level of the plain, to which a steep avenue of gum trees has been made. These were only in the commencement of their second year, and yet some of them were already ten feet high. At the foot of the slope and immediately clear of the inundations is a most productive vegetable garden which had already supplied the house with thirteen different kinds of European vegetables. Though most of these were now over, there was still sufficient left to gratify the cravings of my system for a diet which is never so thoroughly appreciated as after months passed without it. So long as one has to exist on meat, farinaceous food, and an occasional pumpkin or sweet potato, he is not dissatisfied with his lot, but the most *recherché* dinner served by the expert chefs of Europe does not rise so far above the level of ordinary fare, as do the first few meals tempered with such commonplace products as fresh butter, eggs, and vegetables, above the day to day fare of the traveller in the interior.

CHAPTER IX

Cordial reception by LEWANIKA — The loan of an interpreter — A doubtful record — Description of Lewanika — The vastness of his country — His tact as a ruler — The lesson of history — Lewanika suspicious by nature — The wisdom of calling him to the coronation — Arrangements for the future — Monsieur Adolph JALLA — BUROTSE in flood — Return to MONGO — A second visit to Lewanika — A map on the floor — Heavy rains — Cartography — *Au revoir* to MONGO — A final talk with the king — The royal toe itches — Compelled to travel in state — Godspeed from the "kothla" — The king's paddlers — Considerable rainfall — Author's good fortune in weather — Lower Zambezi boys as paddlers — A pitiable comparison — The soldier ant — His power of combination — The great MOKWAI — Her village and house — Hospitable as ever — Extra paddlers lent — A desirable mission station — The importance of a site — A fine piece of river — Expert paddling — The GONYE FALLS — Old friends and bygone incident — More rapid progress — Old associations — Arrival at SESHEKE — Responsibilities of leadership — An anxious night

CHAPTER IX

LEWANIKA, THE MAROTSE KING

LEWANIKA received me with almost demonstrative good will, and thanked me effusively for having undertaken the "great work," as he expressed it, for which I was making this second visit to his country. He at once fell in with all my suggestions with reference to the several routes I proposed for myself and colleagues, and undertook to supply the necessary caravans.

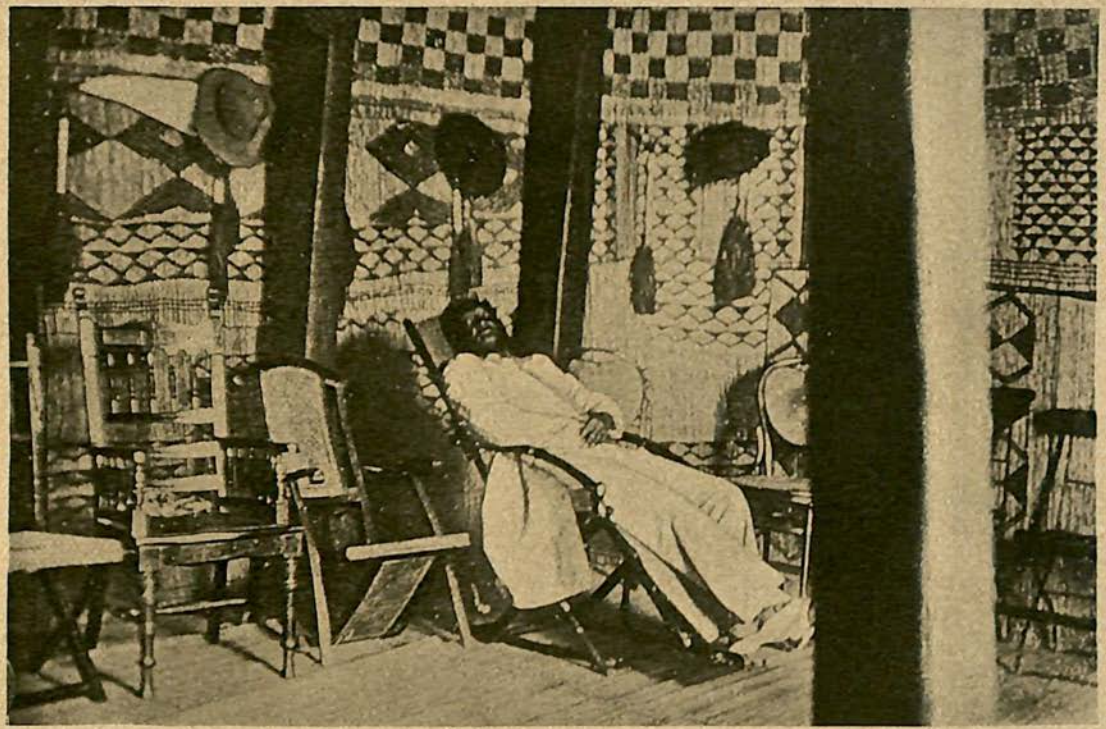
As an interpreter he offered me the services of one Jack, son of old April, a well-known half-caste hunter, who, during the latter years of his life, has been settled on an island at the confluence of the Kwando with the Zambezi. Master Jack — so I was informed by one of my missionary friends — was not a very good character. At an earlier date he had mistaken one of his young stepmothers for his own wife, and on this outrage on family decency coming to light, he had fled before the very natural wrath of his old parent, and placed himself under Lewanika's protection.

In my earlier book allusion to Lewanika was made at some length; but for the benefit of those who have never read that volume, but whose eyes may fall on these pages, I will reintroduce him here.

In general appearance the Marotse king is distinctly prepossessing. His jaw is indicative of strength, and his expression shows thought. In person he is scrupulously clean and neat. Over six feet in height, broad and deep-chested, his physique leaves nothing to be desired. He has the manners of a gentleman and the unobtrusive dignity of the well-bred. As a ruler he does not show that uncompromising austerity in

dealing with his subjects which characterises his neighbour Khama; but while the latter governs his own tribe only (if we except the bushmen of the Kalahari, who in reality wander about the desert untrammelled by anybody's rule), the former rules what is relatively speaking an empire, — a heterogeneous régime embracing a score of "quondam" independent tribes, speaking many different languages, each retaining and influenced by its own tribal customs and characteristics, some governed directly by the king, others through satraps or governors selected by him from among the members of his family, and others again by subject chiefs, the natural leaders of their people, who pay tribute and homage to their sovereign chief. This *imperium in imperio* of which many citizens of the great empire to which it now belongs have never even heard, extends over an area of some 225,000 square miles, and is therefore three times as large as England, Scotland, and Wales combined. An uncompromising despot supported by a subservient aristocracy can control one people, as does the well-meaning, highly praiseworthy, but intolerant chief Khama; but in dealing with a cluster of tribes, many of them larger than his own, and scattered over an immense country, a certain amount of tact is indispensable. The idiosyncrasies of the different communities must be taken into account, and the special circumstances governing each tribe must be considered. Lewanika realises these principles, and as a consequence his empire has increased in size and strength during the thirty years of his rule. Would the empire of which we are justly proud, and of which Europe during the South African crisis showed herself to be so maliciously envious, have justified our pride and Europe's envy had the colonies been governed on eighteenth-century principles? Or would the United States of America be politically foreign to-day had the American colonies from which they have sprung to such magnificent proportions been ruled on nineteenth-century lines?

Over a century ago, the severe teaching of the American rebellion taught Great Britain the necessity of liberality and



Lewanika at Home

tolerance in matters of colonial administration. Of recent years force of circumstances has been replaced by force of inclination, — by a genuine liberality which springs from the heart rather than from the head. Therefore the empire is at last tied together not merely in the material interest of one part or another, but by ties of brotherhood and mutual affection, by common blood, by memories of the same glorious record of the past, by the same noble aspirations for the future. If then I say that Lewanika's liberal treatment of the tribes he governs is due to force of circumstances and a shrewd conception of his own interests, and not to the higher sentiments on which we pride ourselves to-day, I attribute to this half-civilised native ruler motives no less honourable than those which governed the policy of our own great-grandfathers in the days which first gave birth to the system which renders a Greater Britain possible and even probable.

There are many interesting points affecting the relation of Lewanika to his people, the unwritten constitution by which the king's powers are limited, and the history of the Marotse and the subject tribes; but these I will treat to the best of my ability elsewhere, as it is my wish to reserve the more useful and instructive matter for discussion in a form more condensed and concrete than can be aspired to if intermixed with what may be termed the narrative of the expedition.

Lewanika, like most Africans, is instinctively suspicious. Intrigue is a natural product of the race to which he belongs, and consequently he is apt to expect intrigue and the existence of ulterior motives in others. Nor is this to be wondered at so far as his relations with the government are concerned, when it is remembered that thirteen years ago he placed his country under our protection on the sole condition that we should keep it intact in the face of foreign encroachments, and that the complications arising out of those encroachments remain unsettled to-day. Many is the time when in conversation I have endeavoured, and I think to some extent with success, to assure him of our absolute good faith, and to excuse the

delay by impressing him with the vastness of the British Empire, and the hundreds of important questions which everlastingly call for settlement.

"Yes," he said once, "I know that my country is a very long way from England. Perhaps the Queen has never heard of me."

Very wise indeed in my humble judgment was the decision which called him home to witness the coronation of our King, and the result has been more than satisfactory, for Lewanika has returned, proud of his reception, satisfied of the good-will of the King and country, and — as I hear from Marotseland on the best authority, — "not a bit spoilt." With Mr. Coryndon I stood almost alone in the opinion that these results would follow a visit to England, and now those who feared most from it do not disguise their unqualified satisfaction.

I well remember his first reception of me eight years ago. His natural courtesy, his address, and his tactful hospitality were a revelation to me. I did not expect all these qualities in the ruler of a barbarian state. I had many interviews with him, in which he usually gave me to understand by some veneered but apparently simple side question that he suspected me of ulterior personal motives. I can mark the very conversation which dispelled these suspicions once for all. He realised that I was dealing straightforwardly with him, and since that day he has treated me with unqualified confidence. The success of my present visit soon became apparent, and I left him, feeling confident that the objects of the expedition would be fully accomplished. It was arranged that I should travel along the western boundary of his dominions, commencing by following the course of the Okavango and Kwito rivers. Thus I hoped to ascertain to what degree the king exercises power and influence over his more remote dependencies; to add much to our geographical knowledge of a country which was largely new in the field of exploration; gain some definite knowledge of its climate and natural resources; and be in a position to estimate its industrial and commercial possibilities.

Subsequently I visited Monsieur (and Madame) Adolph Jalla, brother of the missionary at Sesheke. The mission station at Lialui is built on a mound some two acres in area, which has been raised to a height of four or five feet above the inundations by the industrious energy of the white ant. It is on such mounds that the inhabitants of Burotse dwell, the sites of their villages during the floods becoming so many islands in the vast swampy plain. All movement beyond the island home is made in "dugout" canoes. In working their canoes the Marotse, unlike every other river or lake tribe with which I have come in contact, do their paddling in a standing position. With one leg well forward, they throw the full energy of the body into their work, the back and legs accounting for most of the power exerted. This method is very much more effective than the short arm and shoulder stroke performed in a sitting or kneeling position.

Late in the afternoon I repaired to the canoe given up to my use, settled down under cover of the shelter, neatly constructed amidships by mats tied down to a wooden framework which offers protection from sun and rain alike, and in an hour and three-quarters was once more on the hill at Mongo.

On the 9th I paid a second visit to Lewanika, who laid himself out to giving me general information about the country and people I was about to visit. At the outset, with the assistance of a piece of dried manioc, which supplied the place of chalk admirably, he made a sketch map of the western section of his country, and as subsequent experience showed, a very good map it was. Though of course the greater part of his vast dominions had never been visited by him, yet he was able to locate rivers and jot in places with a marvellous approach to accuracy, and, as he did so, he would explain his relations with the various tribes in his country and beyond the border. Next he expressed his anxiety with reference to the settlement of his country by white men. He had, he said, asked the English to come in, and would be glad to see them, but he wanted no others. To the Portuguese he took special exception, and remarked that he wished

to have no truck with them, as they treat people with whom they come in contact as though they were beasts. Nor would he have the Boers in his country, and for the same reason. Of the latter he had heard much from Khama, with whom he occasionally exchanged confidences. He impressed on me his conviction that the work I had undertaken would take at least two years to accomplish, and seemed incredulous when I insisted it would be finished in less than half that time.

"And when it is finished," he added, "all the people will praise you."

Four more days, during which the rain fell in torrents, brought me to the end of my visit to Mongo. I felt much the better for the welcome rest, regular living, and good diet which had been lavished on me. My leisure hours had been occupied in compiling a map of the Middle Zambezi for transmission to England.

Bidding adieu to Messrs. Worthington and Aitken, I left for Lialui on the afternoon of the 13th, and at Monsieur Jalla's kind invitation pitched my tent in the mission premises and became his guest for the two days prior to my departure for Sesheke. On the morrow I visited Lewanika. He evinced great interest in my map of the Middle Zambezi, questioned me on every detail, and finally asked if he might show it to his household chiefs, to whom he explained everything he had himself been told.

A comical incident occurred during this interview. Jack, who was interpreting, translated a question, —

"The king wishes to know if he may remove one of his boots, as his toe is itching."

"Certainly," I replied, and one of the household chiefs laid bare his master's foot, and forthwith scratched the royal toe. As the attendant assiduously administered relief, the great man pursued the course of the river on the map.

On the eve of my departure everything was satisfactorily arranged, except that my request to be allowed to travel with a small, select caravan and a single head man was categorically refused. I must, he insisted, have four or five chiefs

and a suitable following. This of course was his way of doing me honour, but I would far sooner have been relieved of the honour and the consequent addition of about one hundred people to my caravan. Experience has taught me that to travel modestly is to travel easily and quickly, and that large caravans are sources of endless worry and delay.

On the 15th I paid my farewell visit to Lewanika. On rising to bid him good-by, he stayed proceedings with a terse "Not yet." A few minutes later we left the house together, to the monotonous strains of the king's band. He led me to the "kothla," where the principal chiefs were already assembled within the building, while groups of humbler folk were dotted about the open space in front. My host gave me a chair on his right, and on proceeding to take his own seat was greeted with the royal salute.[1]

This over, he addressed the "kothla," proclaiming me his trusted friend, and exhorting all his subjects to treat me as such. After thanking him for the manner in which he was furthering my plans, I took my leave amid well-expressed wishes for a safe and prosperous journey.

The king had placed his best canoes and his own paddlers at my disposal for the journey to Sesheke, and I looked

[1] "In obeisance to the sun they" [the Marotse] "kneel on the ground and lower the body until the forehead rests on the earth. They have also a purifying ceremony, in the performance of which they stand in shallow water, and with the palm of the hands outwards, throw water over the face and body. The obeisance and ceremony are also used in doing honour to the king, but in this case water is not actually thrown, though the form of doing so is imitated. These more elaborate compliments, however, are only resorted to on special occasions, such as the first reception of subjects coming in from a distance, or after an event of unusual importance reflecting credit on their king or in some degree calling for a loyal demonstration. In these circumstances the men will advance in line till within twenty yards of the royal presence, when, sinking on the knees, the head is lowered to the ground (chiefs only bend halfway). This they do several times, and between each the hands are clapped some half-dozen times, quickening up towards the end. They then rise together, and, in chorus, go through the form of throwing water over their bodies, and each time the hands are uplifted shout 'Yo-sho.' After this they sit down, and the interview begins." — "Exploration and Hunting in Central Africa."

forward to a quick and pleasant journey down this very beautiful section of the most charming of all the great African rivers. I had travelled to Lialui by the same route in '95, when the water was at its lowest, and was glad to have an opportunity of comparing notes with the river in flood.

This day was the first fine one since the date of my arrival at Mongo. Half the month of February had passed, and during that fortnight no less than 11.44 inches of rain had fallen, almost all of which in the ten days during which I had been comfortably lodged at the Residency. The mean annual rainfall here is 33 inches, so that a third of the year's supply had fallen in this short time. What good fortune was mine in this matter of weather! The heavy downpour commenced on the very day of my arrival. Had I been ten days later, what a journey I should have had from Sesheke! In order to give my boys a certain amount of work during the journey, and at the same time relieve the Marotse canoe men of the necessity of paddling them in comfortable ease for three hundred miles,—to them an uncongenial task except in the case of white men or chiefs,—I arranged with Lewanika that my Lower Zambezi boys, who could paddle according to the art as practised in their own districts, should be distributed between the three crews, and so work their own passage. The Marotse, however, preferred to keep to themselves; and events showed they were no mean judges. Thus my beauties were given a paddle apiece and the lightest canoe, and as in addition to this advantage they had a numerical superiority over the other crews, I trusted they would be able to keep up with them. Then a start was made, and away we went over the inundated plain at a pace which can be attained only by strong, lithe men working together in complete unison.

In ten minutes, Lialui being at least a mile away, the head man ceased paddling and informed me that the third canoe was a long way behind. I crawled out of my little snuggery, and so far to the rear was the boat that it was

difficult to make it out at all. In a quarter of an hour the most pitiable exhibition of boat-craft I have ever witnessed crawled up to us amid jeers and peals of laughter from nine chests of spacious measurement. It was obvious some reform was necessary, or the journey would be a very tedious one indeed. The head man recommended me to ask the great Mokwai for extra paddlers when we reached Nalolo, which is distant about twenty miles from Lialui. This was a sound suggestion; so crawling on for a few miles farther, we camped for the night on a mound on which stood a small village. This mound was also the home of a colony of "serui," or black soldier ants — those active, fierce little insects which have proved so frequently and so disagreeably how effectively unity and organisation, even where insignificant creatures are concerned, can make themselves felt against what on the surface has the appearance of appalling odds. These remarkable little animals will well-nigh cover the body of man or beast with so light a tread as to betray no indication of their presence. Not till each and every ant is in position for attack will any straggler so far controvert discipline as to snatch a meal for himself in anticipation of orders; but the instant the psychological moment has arrived, some signal arranged or sounded in a note too insignificant to strike the senses of the giant he attacks, is conveyed to every ant, and at precisely the same instant hundreds of small forceps tear away as many hundred minute morsels of meat, until, in the case of a tethered calf, a chained dog, a cooped fowl, or indeed — as was not infrequently the case in this very country — a man tied down to death by the fiendish ingenuity of his fellows, the victim is by small degrees deprived of flesh and life, and is left a skeleton with despatch almost inconceivable when the method of disintegration is taken into account. When a white man is attacked, every stitch of clothing must be removed before the little torturers can be swept from his body. The black man, having no clothes to remove, can resist the invasion at the first onslaught, and may be seen dancing about with rapid movement to oppose the invasion

of myriads of little combatants ready to follow up the advantage gained by their advance guard.

That night, as I slept within the security of a strong mosquito curtain, I was rudely awakened by the excited chattering and self-inflicted slaps of the boys, and looking out into the moonlight, I soon learned the cause of their discomfiture.

On the ensuing morning two boys of the village were "fallen in" to accompany us as far as Nalolo, which was reached shortly before midday. I proceeded at once to the house of the king's eldest sister, who, in accordance with the terms of the unwritten constitution, shares with her brother the prerogatives of the Marotse chieftainship. She has a voice and the right of veto in all matters of political importance, and claims the same honours as her brother, and a precedence second only to his. On the death or abdication of the king, his eldest sister and co-ruler falls, *ipso facto*, into political obscurity, and retains only her social precedence in common with other women of the royal house.

Nalolo, like Lialui, stands on a huge ant mound. The great Mokwai, like Lewanika, Letia, and Akanongiswa, dwells not in a hut, but in a house of considerable dimensions, the main feature being a large reception hall rising to the roof, the apex of which is some twenty-five feet above the floor. Sleeping and other rooms, surrounded by eight-foot walls, open into this hall; these being without ceilings, the cool, fresh air beneath the thatched roof has free access to the apartments. The house stands in a spacious courtyard, enclosed by a reed fence nine feet high. As with Lewanika's house, the premises within and without are characterised by neatness and cleanliness.

I found this capricious but hospitable old lady as kindly disposed as of yore, but very much stouter. She was still wife to the same husband, who seems to have established a record in the matter of retaining her affections, or at least her tolerance.[1] Possibly her cravings for change are modifying with advancing years.

[1] *Vide* "Exploration and Hunting in Central Africa," p. 99.

The Mokwai gave immediate instructions to Mosika, my head man, relative to two paddlers which we would find at a certain village *en route.* I gave her a small clock, which added one more to some half-dozen that ornamented the room, all of which seemed to have ticked their last. Possibly a "real alive one" was not unacceptable.

On returning to the canoes, I found several baskets of corn and a "makek" (wooden bowl) of thick milk, which the thoughtful old lady had sent to cheer us on our journey.

As usual, it took some little time to get the two new paddlers down to the boats, so we made only a few miles that afternoon, and slept at a place about thirty miles from Lialui. The next day, however, the crews were well in harness, and by five o'clock P.M. we had travelled a further sixty miles, and slept at Sinanga at the southern extremity of Burotse. Monsieur Boitaux, a previous acquaintance, who belonged to the same mission as the other gentleman referred to, had recently established a station here. His house stood forty feet above the river, and, as a consequence, his little girl, who was born during my earlier visit, wore rosy cheeks and looked the picture of health. I was persuaded that she was a living proof of the contention I had often advanced to my missionary friends, that if they would only build their stations a little distance from the river and on high ground instead of on the alluvial miasma-steeped banks, they would enjoy better health themselves, and their children would not be born one year to die the next. There are cases, as at Lialui and Nalolo, where it is necessary to establish stations under these unhealthy conditions for want of clean, high ground in important native centres, but elsewhere there is no such necessity on the Upper Zambezi. God no doubt helps those who put their faith in Him, but will He help those who neglect to help themselves?

A very pleasant day followed. We had left the flat, monotonous marsh behind, and entered a grand piece of river. The sun shone on a broad, glassy stream contained within high banks, fringed with trees. Many wooded

islands, some large, some small, rose out of the water, much of the lower vegetation being partially submerged. The feeling of movement, too, has, to me at least, a most exhilarating effect. It was a pleasure to watch my tall, clean-limbed crew swish their paddles through the water with all the power and easy grace of men born and bred to their work. Throughout the day, with but one half-hour's break, these men stood to their work, and at the end their stroke was as clean and as long as it was the hour we started. In spite of the fact that we did not leave Sinanga till nine o'clock, we slept that night at Sioma, which is about sixty miles away. While *en route*, as we pulled up for a moment to purchase milk, there was a boy on the bank less one of his arms. It had, he said, been torn away by a crocodile, while he was bathing.

At Sioma it was necessary to drag the canoes on rollers for two miles in order to clear the Gonye Falls and the rapids below them. A few months later a plan which emanated from Lewanika's brain was carried into effect, and now canoes can be towed with ease through a system of narrow canals from a few yards below the river at the one end to a short distance above it at the other.

In the early morning two Sioma chiefs paid us a visit. I recognised them as two out of three who in '95 had refused to sell me even a few pounds of their undoubtedly small stock of corn, but who on my killing three buffaloes, half a day's journey upstream, had, vulture-like, smelt me out and despatched two boys in a canoe to beg a portion of the meat.[1]

"Have you seen me before?" I asked.

"No, we do not remember seeing you."

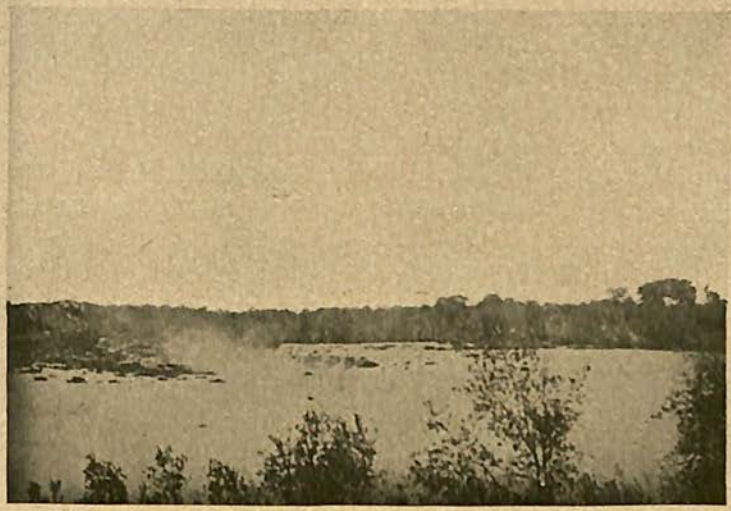
"Do you not remember a white man passing here on his way to see the 'Morena' ["great chief"] about four years ago, and asking you to sell him food as his people were very hungry?"

My friends grinned from ear to ear.

"Ah, we remember now."

"And do you not remember how the white man afterward

[1] "Exploration and Hunting in Central Africa," pp. 84 and 93.



Above—From the South Bank



Below—From the South Bank
The Gonye Falls

killed three buffaloes, and how, forgetting your inhospitality, you sent and asked meat of him, to which the white man replied, 'Just as there was no corn for his hungry boys yesterday, so there is no meat for the chiefs of Sioma to-day'?"

Yes, they remembered all as though it were yesterday, and both they and my present followers enjoyed the joke, and laughed with all the joviality of a light-hearted race.

That day nothing was done in the way of transporting the goods and canoes, and it was not till the following afternoon that everything was clear of this serious bar to navigation. In the meantime I revisited the Gonye Falls, which hitherto I had seen only when the water was at its lowest. Now it was at its highest, and a strong, heavy torrent tumbled over the horseshoe-shaped wall of rock for twenty feet with an almost unbroken fall, until it reached the water level below in a seething mass of boiling foam. Comparison between these falls in the two extremes of season impressed me with the vast increase in volume attained by the Zambezi during the rains.

Once clear of this obstacle, we did another day of excellent work, passing in rapid succession the Matome, Kali, and Bombwi rapids, which, with a few others now completely submerged, had cost a week of hard work in my previous upstream journey. The scenery in this broken stretch is superb — the wide stream passing between irregular banks was painted blue with the reflected colour of a rich, tropical sky and brightened by the rays of a brilliant sun. The trees on the banks and the many islands which rise from the broken, rocky bed were heavily clothed in summer foliage. At sunset we reached the confluence of the Njoko (monkey) River, and here we camped for the night.

Immediately opposite the confluence is a long, wooded island over three-quarters of a mile in length. Rather more than a thousand yards downstream is a second island similar in character and of much the same size. These are both known by the same name, Njoko. In order to differentiate between the two, I have retained that name for the one

opposite the river, and departing for a second time from the rule of adopting native nomenclature, have named the second one Constance Island.

A drizzling rain throughout the night, which continued in a desultory manner till eight o'clock next morning, delayed our departure. One does not rush into the work of a new day with much zeal or inclination on a damp, dull morning. Sleep comes heavily, blankets are more comforting than the outside world, fires won't burn, and breakfast is invariably late. However, when once we did get off, the same rapid travelling was continued, and we passed some half-dozen rapids, amongst them the Busha and the Lusu. Here I discovered a mistake on my original map of these parts — the rapids I had entered as Lusu should have been written Busha. At the Ngambwe Cataract there is a fall of about four feet, which necessitates a short delay, as canoes have to be dragged overland for about two hundred yards. We slept that night near the Manyekanga Rapids, memorable to me as the sight of the camp from which I bagged a couple of lions four years before.

We were delayed the following afternoon by a heavy rainstorm, in consequence of which Sesheke was not reached till an hour and a half after darkness had set in. After seeing my tent pitched on the old spot beneath a huge, far-spreading tree, I repaired to the mission station to hear the latest news. I was disappointed on learning that nothing had been heard of my two colleagues. Mr. Coryndon, on missing me, had made a short journey of inspection into Butoka, and was now at Kazungula. I received an English mail, letters from home being cheerfully written. So far my mind was at rest, but oh! for the anxieties of the leader of an African expedition! Personally I have always made an effort to meet the difficulties of life in a philosophical spirit, especially where circumstances beyond control are concerned. Occasionally, however, troubles loom big, anxieties expand like soap-bubbles, and one falls victim to worries which nine times out of ten burst as soon as pricked, and so as I lay in my tent that night everything seemed unduly black and uncertain. Had the *Constance* made

her return journey without mishap? Had Mr. Muller reached the Kafukwe with the remainder of the flotilla? And, if so, would he be able to collect porters sufficient to transport everything above the unknown falls and cataracts to the navigable river beyond? What could have happened to Captains Quicke and Hamilton, that no news of their movements should be obtainable? And thus to the tune of capsizing boats, native treachery, disease, and death, I fell asleep, only to rise next morning in a more healthy, if still uncertain, frame of mind.

CHAPTER X

A history of the MAROTSE — Heterogeneous community — An unwritten constitution — Africa's mushroom states — Despotism and instability — Parallel to our early history — Verbal confusion — A table of tribal names — Link with the north — Invasion of BUROTSE by AÄLUI — The BALOKWAKWA — Alleged connection of Marotse with the BANYAI of Mashonaland — Dissimilarity of MAROTSE, MASUBIA, and BALOKWAKWA to surrounding tribes — Subject tribes in the early days — Expansion — Makololo invasion of the south — War with Matabele — Treachery meets treachery — A trek to BUTOKA — A Matabele raid — Raiders overtaken and punished — Checked by the MASHIKOLUMBWE — BUROTSE invaded and annexed — Matabele finally worsted — SEBITWANE'S death — MAMOCHISANE and SEKELETU — Makololo massacred by Marotse — Return of Marotse dynasty — Sepopa's cruelty — His assassination — NGANANWINA succeeds, but is deposed by LOBOSI — LOBOSI driven into exile in '84 — His return to power under name of LEWANIKA — His desire for progress — Provincial government — The king's co-ruler — Genealogical tree — The classes and the masses

CHAPTER X

MAROTSELAND: HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Now as we are on the threshold of our work in Marotseland, a historical sketch of the paramount tribe and a few essential particulars belonging to its government will not be out of place. It will not merely serve to give an insight into the growth of this powerful black oligarchy — this interesting tribe which numerically forms but a trifling minority in a widely spread sovereignty, and which by dint of its physical and intellectual superiority has become the governing power in the midst of a heterogeneous community, so incohesive and unprogressive as to be powerless to assert its individual rights to self-government, and perhaps in most instances reluctant to do so on account of the comparative security from internecine strife enjoyed under a common ruler; it will also supply an illustration of the natural process by which primitive states spring into existence, constitutions develop, and civilisation creeps forward.

It is true, the term "civilisation" can be applied only in a comparative sense in this instance, but, as I shall hope to show, these people are generations ahead of the vast majority of barbarian powers in Africa, which at times, by reason of their very barbarity and warlike tendencies, have supplied pages in the history of our expanding empire.

Marotseland possesses a constitution — albeit an unwritten one — which places it on a higher level than the powerful but transient military despotisms of southern and central Africa. In less than half the time in which Marotse devel-

opment has been in steady progress, the kingdoms of the Muato Yamvo, and Msidi in the north, and the Zulus and Matabele in the south, have sprung into existence, overcome or exterminated their neighbours, and themselves collapsed and become extinct.

The position of such organisations is mainly dependent on the strength of one man, a despot in the worst sense of the word. A strong successor gives a fresh lease of life; a weak one leads the way to disorganisation and collapse. The tyrant is usually surrounded by councillors, but their position and life depend largely on the acceptability of their counsels. On the other hand, the Marotse king is bound by the influence of long-standing custom. His eldest sister and co-ruler has her say, and his chiefs are as jealous of their rights as were King John's barons of theirs.

It is true that in Marotseland, as in early England, the king has it in his power to oppress his subjects, but even the worm will turn. A retrogressive policy breeds discontent, and discontent is the father of revolution. All this was forcibly brought home to Lewanika in '84, and Sepopa, his uncle and predecessor, lost his throne and his life as a penalty for years of oppression.

Generally speaking the African of to-day is no more civilised than were the wode-painted Britons who fell back before the discipline of the Roman legions; but the Marotse may be said to find a parallel in our Saxon forefathers at the time of the Danish invasion. No African possesses the grit of our sturdy old forefathers, spared as they were the influence of an enervating climate. This fact, no doubt, accounts for the abnormally slow progress effected by even the more intellectual African races, which seem to be tied down by lack of energy rather than by want of intelligence.

Before entering into the question of history, I wish to say a few words on the nomenclature of the tribes and their countries — a topic which claims consideration if only on account of the state of confusion to which this subject has been reduced.

Half a century ago, during the interregnum of the Makololo, who had temporarily reduced the Marotse to a state of serfdom, Livingstone visited the country. In the account of his travels he incorrectly refers to these people as *Ba*-rotse, an error which has been adopted freely ever since by those who have no personal experience of the people. Thus we usually read of *B*arotseland and only occasionally of *M*arotseland. It is easy to surmise how our greatest explorer fell into the error. For a time, the Marotse, numerically insignificant, were in the same position as the tribes they had ruled — slaves of their conquerors. For every score belonging to other tribes only an occasional Murotse would come under his notice, and he only in the capacity of one of many servants to some Makololo chief. On the other hand, that great flat plain, their home, had lost none of its importance. It was still a rich field for cattle, and an important adjunct to the Makololo dominions. The traveller would frequently hear of Bŭ-rotse (the country of the plain), and when he reached those monotonous flats, he would be told he was now in Bŭ-rotse — and the short *u* is not widely distinct from the short *a*. It is no doubt of trifling importance whether the people of this country are spoken of as Marotse or Barotse; but a book which professes to give more than a mere surface impression of a people with whom the author has been intimately associated for more than the proverbial five minutes which are said to qualify the traveller to lay down the law, some aspiration to accuracy at the expense of space may be tolerated.

The following table is the result of very careful interviews with Lewanika and his son-in-law Ishambai (who speaks and writes English admirably), and corresponds with my own observation in the districts occupied by most of the tribes enumerated. Every syllable was carefully repeated before and after entry. With reference to it, I should explain that subsequent to the Makololo invasion, changes and modifications took place which have been permanently adopted by the people concerned. In such cases the original names are entered in brackets immediately below those in vogue to-day: —

PERSONAL (collective)	PERSONAL (singular)	COUNTRY
Marotse	Mŭrotse	Bŭrotse
(Aälui	Mŭlui	Ŭlui)
Balokwakwa	Mŭlokwakwa	Lokwakwa
(Aälŭkŏlui	Mŭkwalŭkŏlui	Lŭkŏlui)
Bakaündi	Mŭkwakaündi	Kaündi
(Aäkaündi	Mukwakaündi	Kaündi)
Matotela	Mŭtotela	Bŭtotela
(Andui	Mŭndui	Bŭndui)
*[1] Malobale	Mŭlobale	Lobale
(Alobale)		
Malŭnda	Mŭlŭnda	Lŭnda
(Aälunda)		
Mankoya	Mŭnkoya	Bŭnkoya
(Aängoya	Mŭkwangoya	Bŭngoya)
† Matoka	Mŭtoka	Bŭtoka
Bamashasha	Mŭkwamashasha	Mashasha
Mashikolŭmbwe	Mŭshikolŭmbwe	Bŭshikolŭmbwe
° Mambŭnda	Mŭmbŭnda	Bŭnda
[2] Malŭchasi	Mŭlŭchasi	Lŭchasi
Mampukushu	Mŭmpukushu	Bŭmpukushu
[3] Ba- or Ma- chibŏkwe	Mŭchibŏkwe	Chibŏkwe
Bamakoma	Mŭkwamakoma	Makoma
Mamboë	Mŭmboë	Bŭmboë
Bamashĕ	Mukwamashe	Mashĕ
Maïyè	Mŭïyè	Wuïyè

The *aä*, which is distinctly in two syllables, seems in sound narrowly to approach the *wa* of the tribes occupying the

* The foregoing gives the people and country according to the Marotse, under whose sovereignty they are. In the following cases the people concerned respectively speak of themselves and their country thus: —

[1] Valovale or Valuena	Kalovale or Kaluena	Lovale
[2] Valuchasi	Kaluchasi	Luchasi
[3] Vachioko	Kachioko	Chioko

† Prior to their subjection by the Marotse this tribe was known as BATONGA, a name which still applies to the eastern section, which has not fallen under the Marotse yoke.

° The Mambunda sometimes style themselves MAWIKI.

country between the northern lakes and the east coast. If we also note the *u* and the *bu*, signifying country in those districts, we will see that here also is an interesting analogy. The country of the *Wa*ganda is *Bu*ganda or *U*ganda, though it has been stated that the latter is incorrect. The *Wa*nyoro, too, live in *U*nyoro to the west of Buganda.

So far as I can gather, the Aälui, the forefathers of the Marotse of to-day, invaded the broad, long plain now known as Burotse between 250 and 300 years ago. Prior to this, for a period which I have been unable to estimate even approximately, they dwelt two hundred miles to the northeast on the Middle Kabompo. A section of the tribe which did not take part in the invasion of the plain still occupies the old haunts under the name of Balokwakwa, though in those early days these were known as Aälukolui. There is little doubt but that the Aälui originally migrated from the far north, though Lewanika, from whom I gleaned most of this history of his people, has but a hazy idea of events prior to the Kabompo settlement.

Allusion was made in a previous paragraph to the analogy which would seem to connect this tribe with the people of the northern lakes. Five hundred miles to the northeast is a tribe which calls itself Aäkaündi. I was struck with the similarity in feature between these people and the Marotse, and when I discovered that they used the affix *Aä* it occurred to me that ethnologists of the future may be able to connect the two tribes and supply another step in the route of migration. At a still later date my theory, mere conjecture though it be at present, seemed to gain shape when I entered Uganda. In type the Marotse with the Balokwakwa and Masubia bear a far closer resemblance to the Waganda than to the tribes by whom they are surrounded. Physically and intellectually they are alike the superiors of the vast majority of the African races, both have been more progressive in the past and promise well for the future. Serotse[1]—

[1] *Se* denotes language.

the language of the Marotse — will no doubt supply an important clew as to their origin, but as yet no white man has had an opportunity of studying it, as the people habitually converse in Sekololo, a Sesuto dialect, using their own language only when they wish to make a remark "aside." Mr. Coryndon gives me an instance of a South African native who had spent a few years in Mashonaland, understanding Serotse from his knowledge of the Mashona dialect. There are other ethnological facts pointing to a connection between these people, which have been construed into evidence that the Marotse are an offshoot of the so-called Mashona, and entered Burotse from the south. Also there is said to have existed in the heart of Matabeleland, during the earlier years of the Matabele settlement, a small tribe known as Barotse, who were eventually exterminated or absorbed by the invading tribe. I believe ethnologists are agreed that the forefathers of the inhabitants of Mashonaland, in common with the ancestors of the majority of South African tribes, migrated from the north. All the evidence I have been able to collect seems to imply that their connection with the Marotse, if any, existed either prior to the great migratory move, or was at least severed many generations ago. The Mashonas and Marotse of to-day are totally distinct in type and colour. If therefore they have been in any way associated one with the other, either their relations would seem to have been those of master and slave, or a very considerable fusion of blood has affected one tribe or both. In type the Marotse and the upper class Masubia are practically identical; were politically connected before the earliest tradition extant; and are in all probability two branches of one tribe. They intermarry freely, while, as between the Marotse and other tribes, intermarriage is rare.

From other tribes in the Upper Zambezi basin and from all South African races these people are unmistakably distinct — a fact which seems to infer that at least any admixture of alien blood in their case has been inconsiderable. Though the Marotse kingdom of to-day has never been so

large as it has become during the last twenty years of Lewanika's reign, it has none the less occupied an important position for the best part of two centuries. From what can be gathered in the hazy field of tradition, within a very short lapse of time subsequent to the invasion of Burotse by the Aälui, the jurisdiction of their chief extended to the mid-Kabompo in the north and to the Kwando-Zambezi confluence in the south, and included the Andui (Matoleta), Aängoya (Mankoya), and Aälukolui (Balakwakwa), to the east of the river and a considerable strip to the west, extending as far as the Luena in the north. Beyond the Luena the great Lunda empire of Muato Yamvo stretched for hundreds of miles into what is now the Congo State, and reached from the shores of Mweru in the east to within five hundred miles of the west coast. At a very early period an alliance seems to have taken place between the Aälui and the Mambunda in the west. That far-reaching tribe placed itself under the supreme sovereignty of the former, retaining to this day — in theory at least — their status as an unconquered tribe, a relationship similar in principle to that which unites England and Scotland. In the middle of the eighteenth century, in the reign of the Aälui king Mwanaserunda — eighth ruler in succession from the invader — the seeds of an extension to the southeast were sown. The inhabitants of a small district in the neighbourhood of the Katima Molilo Rapids on the Zambezi quarrelled and fought with their neighbours who occupied the site of Kazungula, opposite the Kwando-Zambezi confluence. Blood was spilled, and Mwanabinye, the king's brother who governed the southern provinces, thought it advisable to remove the Katima Molilo people to Mashĕ, the name by which the Kwando swamps are known. Fifty years later a section of the tribe trekked further to the southwest, settled on the Okavango, and have been since known as the Mampukushu. About forty years ago the Lunda Empire tottered, and the outlying people being abandoned by the central power, became practically independent in the form of numerous little chieftainships. Through the Valovale, the Aälui dominions

subsequently expanded in the northwest at the expense of the Aälunda (Malunda), and at a later date that section of the tribe known to-day as Malunda, who occupy the country between the Kabompo and the Zambezi-Congo watershed, transferred their allegiance to the ruler of the Marotse. Whether the Aäkaünda fell in at this time, or have always been connected through the Aälukolui, I have no evidence to prove. Certainly to-day the Aäkaünda and Malunda tribute provides Lewanika with his main supply of ivory.

Thus in 1825 the Aälui dominions under Marambwa covered a vast territory, and were only smaller than Lewanika's country by Lunda and the more recent encroachments of the Valovale as far as the Congo-Zambezi watershed in the north, and by Matokaland and Mashikolumbweland in the southeast.

About this time circumstances of a far-reaching character commenced to develop. Marambwa died, leaving a large family of mere children, none being old enough to assert his rights to his father's throne. Selunalumi, their uncle, took advantage of the tender years of his young nephew, the rightful heir, and usurped his position. This step gave rise to political dissension. The country was divided against itself, and became weakened at a time when the development of a crisis in the south required all its strength. A native ruler of quite exceptional ability, both as a leader in war and an administrator in peace, had left his native home to the west of Basutoland, and with his women and cattle had established himself at Lake Ngami at the head of a small, compact band of warriors. This was Sebitwane, the chief of the Makololo, a tribe allied by blood to the Basuto.

Those who know the region of Lake Ngami will not marvel that Sebitwane shortly arrived at the conclusion that he had not come to stay. In a short time he turned his attention to the north, and crossed the Kwando at Kulatou into the southern district of the Aälui dominions. An Aälui army was despatched to resist the invaders. Sebitwane's general, Bololo, attacked it in the open plain a few miles to the north

of Linyante, where he had established his headquarters. Success attended the Makololo arms, and the Aälui being signally defeated, broke up and fled. Thus Sebitwane's power was established in the southern province, for his enemies, weakened as they were by internal dissension, did not venture to offer further resistance.

After resting his people and assuring himself that he had nothing further to fear from the people of the country, the Makololo chief led his warriors into what is now known as Butoka, crossing the Zambezi at its junction with the Kwando. Here he met with no active resistance from the inhabitants, but his raid was noteworthy from the fact that it led to a first contact with the Matabele in which Sebitwane outwitted his enemies by meeting treachery with treachery.

It appears that the Matabele, under pretence of quarrel, separated into two "impis." One of these approached Sebitwane, sending messengers of peace to greet him. After going into the feigned quarrel with their brethren, the message ran thus: "Come, let us join together and fight the Matabele over there."

"We will talk about this," said the Makololo; "but first your impi had better make camp over there, and I will remain here," and arrangements were made for a parley. On dismissal of the messengers, Sebitwane ordered his warriors to shorten the shafts of their spears, and conceal them under the skins which covered their nakedness. At the time appointed the Matabele advanced for the interview, but Sebitwane despatched a messenger to their captain, saying:—

"Why do you come armed, seeing that I and my people are unarmed? I will await you while you return to your camp to deposit your assegais."

This they did, and the interview commenced.

"Which is Sebitwane?" inquired the Matabele chief.

The people pointed out the wrong man.

"No, you are not Sebitwane," said one, and recognising the Makololo leader, he was pointed out. At this juncture an

order from Sebitwane brought the shortened spears from their cover, and the Matabele were murdered to a man.

Sebitwane now returned to Linyante, and gathering together the bulk of his tribe, removed his headquarters to the healthy uplands of Butoka. Here he remained in peace for about two years, during which he husbanded his resources, and planted useful trees which he imported from a distance. I have seen many instances of natives felling trees which have taken generations to grow, in order the more easily to possess themselves of a few quarts of honey or fruit from the upper branches, but never before had I heard of the African who looked so far ahead as to plant a tree, unless to mark the last resting-place of a great chief. Though a great warrior, it does not appear that Sebitwane ever gave himself up to fighting for the sake of fighting, and it is more than probable that Marotseland of to-day would have been divided between the Aälui and Makololo dynasties, had not circumstances once more compelled the latter to take the field. The Matabele were once more on the move, and arrived in Butoka at an opportune moment, when Sebitwane and a number of his warriors were absent from his town. Taking advantage of their good fortune, the raiders swooped down on their antagonists, carried off the women and cattle, and crossed the Zambezi on their return to Buluwayo. The ordinary native accepts reverse with extraordinary equanimity, but Sebitwane was an exception. Gathering together a select band of warriors, he pursued, by forced marches, fell on his spoilers, hopelessly routed them, and repossessed himself of his own. Conscious of the fact that Mosilikatse, the Matabele king, would not let matters rest here, he decided to increase the space between his rival and himself. His objective this time was the Mashikolumbwe country, but at the hands of these naked and warlike savages he suffered defeat — the first and only reverse recorded against him when he himself commanded in person. He was, however, able to cover his retreat, and retiring in a northwesterly direction to the upper reaches of the Njoko, he turned westward, and

crossing the Lumbi and Lui rivers, passed Nanjckwa Pan, and invaded the great plain which was subsequently named Burotse — the country of the plain. The conquest of the Aälui seems to have been an easy matter, as these people were still fighting among themselves, and one of the rival factions threw in their lot with the invaders. The royal family, and many of their supporters, fled to the Kabompo, and settled amongst their kinsfolk, the Aälukolui. Among the young sons of Marambwa, the late king, — whose grave is still marked by a shady tree immediately without Lewanika's stockade, — the following grew to be men in their new home. Dimbua, whose son Tatela for a time snatched the chieftainship from his cousin Lewanika; Imasiku, who was murdered by his brother Sepopa; Letia, the father of Lobosi, later known as Lewanika; Sebesu, the father of Ngananwina, who, after ruling for a few months, was deposed by Lewanika; and Sepopa, the first of the restored line.

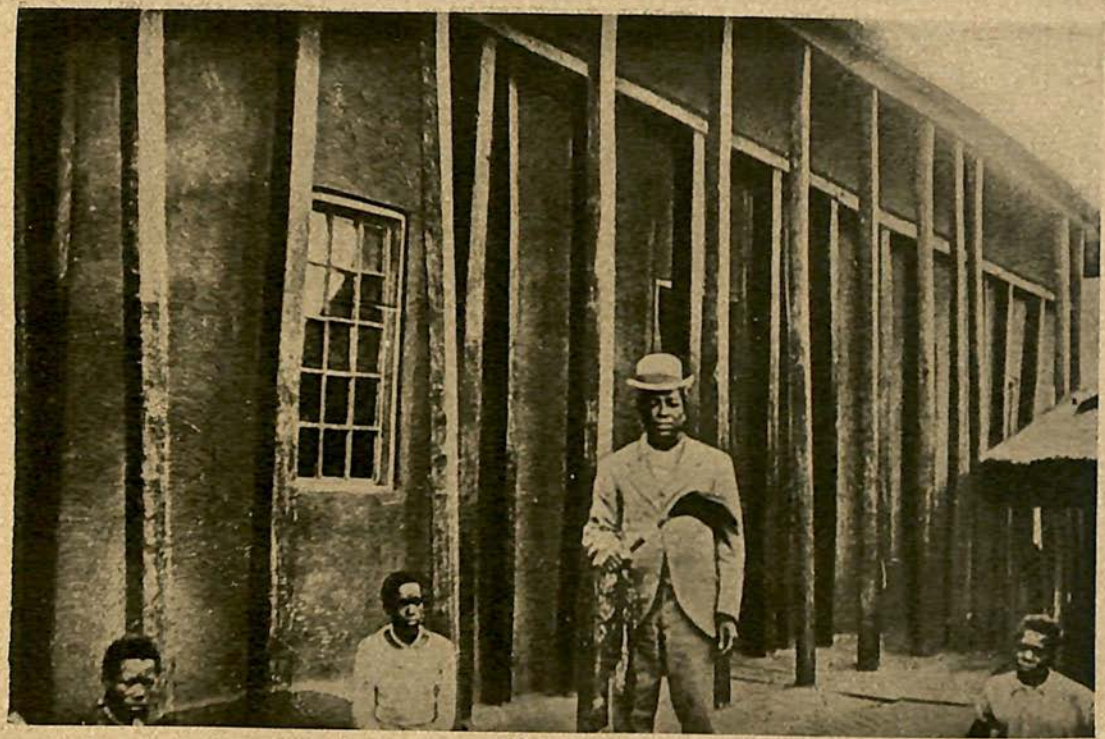
Subsequently Sebitwane spent his time between Burotse and Linyante, and devoted his energies almost entirely to the peaceful development of his extensive dominions. He soon became popular with the subjugated people, for he governed them considerately and liberally, and "fed them when hungry." Once more Mosilikatse tried issue with him and despatched a powerful impi to avenge the defeat recorded above, but Sebitwane found means of exterminating his enemies without recourse to open battle. The Matabele impi followed the eastern bank of the Zambezi, and were allowed to advance a considerable distance without opposition, but also without the means to replenish their supplies, for everything edible was transferred to the many islands in the river. At length their route took them past an island from which the bleating of a goat was heard. In the reeds they discovered a man in a canoe, apparently in hiding. In answer to questions, he stated that many Makololo with their women and cattle were on the island, and under penalty of death he was ordered to ferry them across. The canoe plied backwards and forwards until a sufficient force was concentrated

on the island to advance from cover to the attack. The Makololo now upset the canoe and swam away to safety, drowning the Matabele who guarded him. To their discomfiture the warriors found that they had been outwitted, for the only living creature on the island was a tethered kid bleating for its mother. Those on the island died of starvation, and few of the remainder, if any, survived to tell the tale. Since this salutary lesson, the Matabele have frequently raided the Matoka and Mashikolumbwe, but have never ventured near the central districts of the country. At a later period the sons of Marambwa advanced to the attack at the head of an impi of Aälui a Aälukolui, but met with signal defeat. Sepopa escaped and returned to the Kabompo, but his brother Sebesu was taken prisoner. Sebitwane followed up his success by despatching a force against the Aälukolui, but falling into an ambuscade, many lost their lives, and few returned to tell the news. From this incident came the Aälukolui name of Balokwakwa or people of the ambuscade. At the end of an eventful and lengthy reign, Sebitwane died at Linyante in 1850 from the effects of an old wound. Livingstone, who attended him in his last hours, speaks of him in high terms of praise. Sebitwane was succeeded by his daughter Mamochisane, but the task of ruler was uncongenial to her temperament, and she longed to resign her power and be "as other women are." At her request her young brother Sekeletu replaced her. He was but eighteen years old when he succeeded. Livingstone describes him as "about five feet seven inches, not so good looking nor able as his father, but equally friendly to the English." After ruling uneventfully for fourteen years he died of leprosy, and was succeeded by his uncle Mbolowa, a younger brother of Sebitwane. This man reigned only a short time, and showed but little consideration to his subjects. He would amuse himself at the expense of his servants, and it is told of him that he could not resist the temptation of pricking his paddlers with a spear, and found mirth in the howls his playful pranks would call forth. He soon lost the affection and respect of his people, and hastened

the ruin of his house. A faction of the Makololo put forward a rival claimant to the chieftainship, and civil war broke out among the small, compact oligarchy whose unity had been its strength, and whose strength had enabled it within the space of forty years to establish its authority over a country twice the size of Great Britain. While the Makololo spilt their own blood, the Marotse, as the Aälui were now called, looked on for a while. A few leading spirits plotted, and awaited an opportune moment to strike for freedom. The fateful night arrived, and when the sun rose, with the exception of one small band, every Makololo man, throughout the length and breadth of the land, lay stiff and cold. A few women alone were spared, and these were appropriated by their former slaves. The few survivors — among whom were two or three chiefs of the blood — found their way to Lake Ngami, and were hospitably received by the Batawana chief. Subsequently these became so popular with his people that their royal host feared lest his subjects should remove him in favour of one of the young princes; so to defeat any such inconvenient project, the latter were put to death. Thus in 1865 the Marotse were once more masters in their own country, and all that was left of their Makololo conquerors was their memory and their language, which to this day is in general use by the paramount tribe and many of their subjects.

Steps were at once taken by the revolutionists for the election of a king, with the result that a message was sent to Lokwakwa, inviting Sepopa the son of Marambwa to assume sovereignty. The new king was a man of goodly presence, and commenced his reign creditably; but as he began to realise his power, he quickly degenerated into a cruel monster, giving way to unprovoked and wanton brutality. It is told of him that at Sesheke, which he selected as his seat of government, it was his wont to seat himself on the bank while he caused his own subjects to be thrown to the crocodiles. These reptiles remember their feasts on human flesh to this day, for scarcely a month passes during which some hapless woman or child is not seized from the bank whilst drawing

water. It is not remarkable that a people who had so recently rid themselves of a foreign dynasty should tire of the monster they had unawares set up in its place. They had leapt from the frying-pan into the fire, and now they set about to quench the fire also. Open rebellion broke out, and Sepopa, accompanied by a handful of followers, fled, but only to be shot from behind by one of his own servants. Sorely wounded, he reached the river, entered a canoe, and attempted to quit the country, but before he reached the Kwando confluence he succumbed to his wound, and the country was rid of a bloodthirsty tyrant. His nephew Ngananwina, son of Sebesu, succeeded him, but his claims were challenged by Lobosi, later known as Lewanika, who in point of birth had prior claims. After a reign of six months only, the new king was routed in a pitched battle on the banks of the Lumbi River. Some say he was killed, others that he made good his escape and fled to the west. However, since that day nothing more has been heard of him. Lobosi assumed sovereignty as twenty-first ruler in succession from the original invader of the plain. He removed the seat of government to Lialui, and it is said that the early years of his rule were marked by many deeds of harshness. However, for fourteen years, or thereabouts, he continued to reign over an increasingly discontented people, until in the middle of '84 the people, headed by their chiefs, rose in arms. The angry clamour of his subjects outside his palisade brought his position home to him, and had he not shown praiseworthy resource and pluck, he would have been the fourth successive ruler of the country to meet his death at the hands of his subjects. Assuming a bold front, he emerged from his gates with rifle in hand, and it is said that one or two of the clamouring mob fell to his bullets. Sternly commanding the people to make way for him, they, completely taken by surprise, stood back, while the man they had learned to fear passed on. Before his would-be destroyers fully recovered from their surprise, the king had escaped them, and they fell to and plundered the royal premises. With a single exception



Exterior of Lewanika's House

all his children and his wives were murdered in cold blood — Letia, then a boy of fourteen, passed unobserved through the excited crowd, and followed his father into exile.

The king's flight took him in a southwesterly direction to the Kwando swamps, but he did not remain here long, and proceeded to a place called Kwen, three days' journey beyond that river. The people received him well, and a year afterward, when reinstated in power, he rewarded his host by a present in the form of a wife. For better security he deemed it wise still further to increase the space separating him from the revolutionists, so betook himself to Kanyetu in the Namarwa country to the west of the Kwito — the Namarwa being a Makwengari tribe. Here he spent the fall of the year '84, employing his time in making "gardens," but before harvesting time a messenger arrived from Lebebe Andara, chief of the Mampukushu, in which he warned his exiled sovereign that the Makwengari meditated killing their chief and putting him in his place. The message proceeded to beg him to accept the hospitality and security of Tepanana Island, lest his host Niangana should endeavour to save his own life at the expense of that of the exile chief. Lewanika accepted the suggestion, and leaving Ingwangwana, one of his faithful adherents, to reap the crops he had sown, descended the Kwito to the Okavango, and awaited events on the island. Here he was joined by Mamili, from whom I gleaned most of the subsequent facts.

In the meantime desultory fighting had broken out in Burotse. The rebels who had called Tatela, another grandson of the late king Marambwa, to power were in the field under Sukafela, the prime mover in the revolution. Opposed to him was a small force of Lewanika's partisans, who were held together by his eldest sister, the Mokwai of Nalolo. The king's party however, was not strong enough to hold its own, and was compelled to retreat southward to a village near Seroka on the lower Kwando. Here Lewanika joined his sister and marched toward Burotse. As he advanced, the western people who had remained loyal throughout swelled

his ranks, while those to the east of the Zambezi flocked to Tatela's standard. In the first fight the king's party, led by his general Serumba, defeated their enemies, and Tatela fled whither he had come—to Lokwakwa. Sukafela, however, rallied his forces, and in his turn won a battle, the king being compelled to cover his retreat by crossing the river. Once more Lewanika marched on Lialui, receiving news three hours after daybreak that the rebel army was advancing to meet him. Crossing to the west bank of the river, he recrossed higher up, and the fight commenced. The king remained with the reserve during the first onslaught, Mamili accompanying the attacking force. The fight lasted till after midday, when the loyalists were driven back and returned to Lewanika in the rear. Lewanika now determined on a desperate effort, and mounted on a horse led the attack in person. According to Mamili he behaved with great gallantry, killing many of his enemies with his own hand. Yet again the king's forces wavered, and defeat appeared imminent. However, there was at the time at Lialui a well-known trader—Mr. John Macdonald—and to him the king sent an urgent appeal for help. Mr. Macdonald's sympathies were with Lewanika, and looking at the circumstances, in the light of subsequent events, he did the right thing in interfering on the king's behalf. The scale was instantly turned. The rebels were routed absolutely and finally, and that night Lewanika reëstablished himself at Lialui. Mr. Macdonald was liberally treated by the king, who to this day remembers with gratitude the timely aid vouchsafed by the Scotch trader. When a few years ago he heard of his benefactor's death, he did not attempt to disguise his sorrow, and added, "Truly, he was my friend." On his restoration to power the king assumed the name Lewanika in lieu of Lobosi.

Lokwakwa was no longer a safe asylum for the fugitive Tatela, who fled to Butoka, where he was murdered by his brother Wamarunga, in order, it is said, to curry favour with Lewanika. However, in this he was disappointed, and after first swooping down on Sesheke and carrying off a number

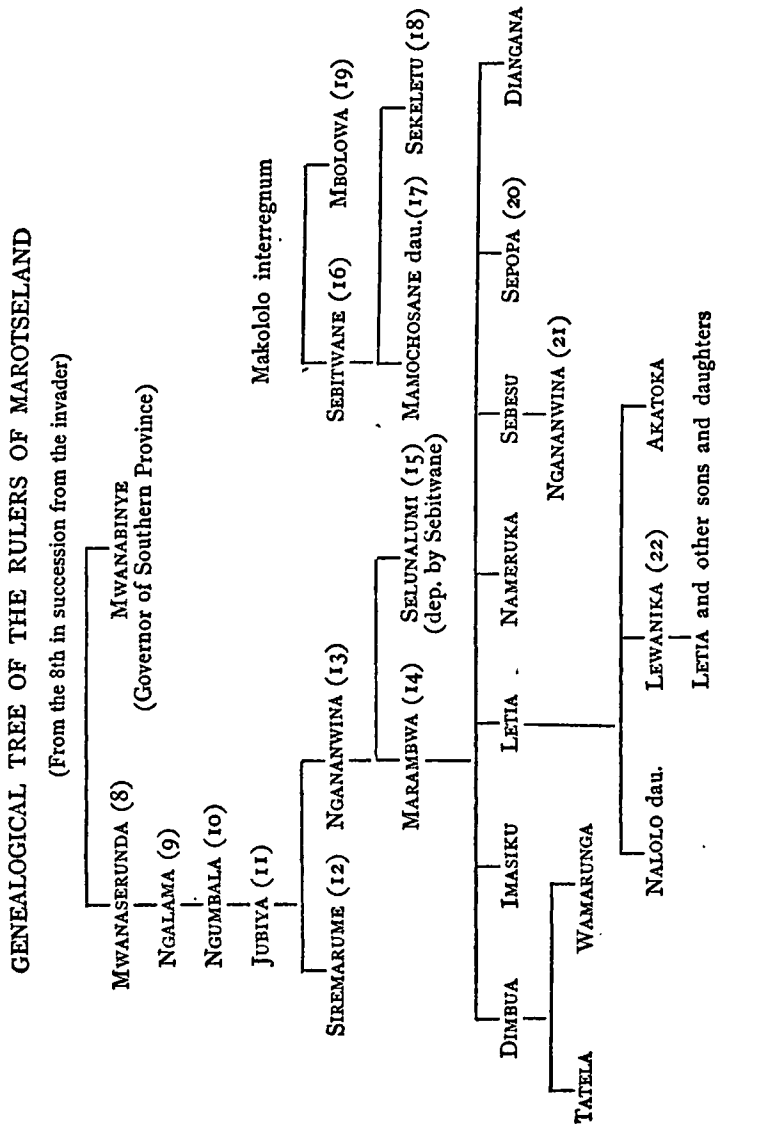
of cattle, and next instigating the treacherous attack on Mr. F. C. Selous, in which the well-known hunter and explorer lost all his goods and some of his followers, he met his death at the hands of the Matabele.

Since his restoration Lewanika has added eighteen years to his reign. At first — as indeed might be expected — he vented his wrath on the sympathisers with the movement which had driven him into exile, but gradually the lofty character and impressive personality of Monsieur Coillard, who established his mission at Lialui shortly after the stirring events recorded above, have obliterated the harsh side of his nature, engendered nobler aspirations, and developed a certain liberality of sentiment and a laudable desire to raise his people to a higher scale of civilisation. I have known him for the past eight years only, and the harshness of his earlier years is but hearsay to me; but of this I am convinced — that his cultured manner and exceptional character are natural and intrinsic and not imported. The latent seed has germinated under the influence of a strong and high-minded personality, and the result reflects the highest credit on the pioneer missionary, and those who have laboured under his directions and influence.

For purposes of government the Marotse dominions are divided into provinces which are locally ruled under persons appointed by the king. In cases where the local head of a distant tribe is loyal to the king his succession to the chieftainship of his people is usually vested in his person, as in the case of Kanungesa of the Malunda, and Katonga-tonga of the Mambunda. In the case of the Valovale, where the people live under a gynocracy, a man is selected by the Marotse king from among the sons of the chieftainesses to act as his deputy and collector of tribute. He receives the title of Kakengi, and is invested with the "insignia" of a Marotse chief, — an ivory bangle, — but has no local constitutional rights, which are entirely exercised by the ruling chieftainess.

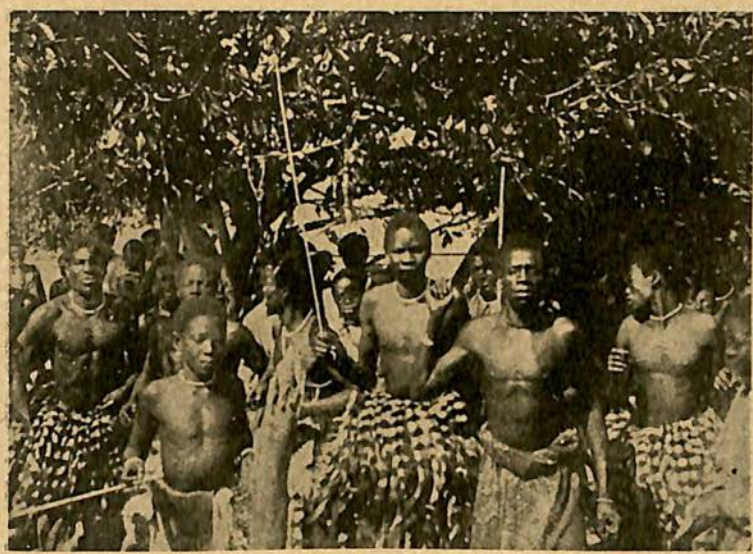
The eldest sister of the king for the time being is, *de facto*, co-ruler with him. She must be consulted in all matters of state,

and possesses the right of veto. This lady, who is known as *the* Mokwai (princess) — as does the king himself — rules a province over which she has, theoretically at least, absolute control. Other provinces are ruled by members of the royal family assisted as controllers of sub-districts by Marotse chiefs. Out-





Dancers and Spectators



Marotse Dancing in Honour of the New Moon

side the royal family the people are subdivided into three great classes — chiefs, freemen, and slaves. All chiefs are Marotse either by blood or appointment, and the descendants of chiefs, who do not themselves receive appointments as such, are freemen. The remainder are slaves or serfs, who in their turn are subdivided into classes, though all are "owned" by chiefs. The upper class serf frequently owns a village, and himself possesses slaves. In such a case he is liable to render occasional service to his chief, as were our feudal classes to their superiors. The judicial system and other matters of interest are alluded to in other chapters, so that repetition here is unnecessary. Such matters as marriage and native industry will be considered at a later period, when the majority of the tribes referred to shall have been introduced to the reader.

CHAPTER XI

A virulent insect—Mr. CORYNDON'S arrival—His knowledge of the Middle Zambezi—The success of river journey and his previous misgivings—Travel to KAZUNGULA—Captain Hamilton's arrival—His travel-worn condition—Mistaken for a missionary—Captain Quicke's diary—The worst class of native—Avarice personified—Captain Hamilton goes hunting—Disappearance of his canoe—Aquatic adventures of his boy—So near and yet so far—A long journey to a near point—Captain Quicke in solitude—Meditations and a tortoise—His boy's anxiety—An improvised drum—Captain Hamilton's reported disappearance—His reappearance—Captain Quicke settles down at MAKWA—Board at 3*s.* per diem—The contractor evades his contract—But not for long—LETIA'S porters arrive—The DAKA in flood—Difficulty in crossing—Captain Hamilton's progress barred—He follows to MAKWA—Persistent rains—Short commons—Stopped by UMGWEZI River—Food and demoralisation—An impossible situation—Captain Hamilton with one boy travels to KAZUNGULA—Attempt to intercept Captain Quicke—An impudent crocodile—Letter from Mr. Weller—Very bad news—Mr. Muller reported dying—Prospective failure of river party—Mr. Weller's ill-health—Trader undertakes to bring supplies from Buluwayo—Captain Quicke at SESHEKE—His adventure with lion and lioness—An anxious position—Stuck in the mud—Civilised man in uncivilised Africa

CHAPTER XI

SESHEKE AND KAZUNGULA

I HAD a very painful experience the evening after my return to Sesheke, when a minute fly, whose virulence must have been out of all proportion to its size, took refuge beneath my eyelid. The irritation was intense, and the after results were more than ordinarily inconvenient, for during the succeeding four days I was totally blind in one eye, and could see but dimly with the other. My sight returned almost as suddenly as it had vanished, so I conclude the insect had remained in the eye until the pain ceased, though no one was able to detect its presence.

In the meantime a message announcing my arrival brought Mr. Coryndon to Sesheke. He is one of the few European travellers personally acquainted with the Middle Zambezi, having travelled the contiguous country some years previously. The fact of our having taken six months to reach the Victoria Falls, from the sea — a distance of less than fourteen hundred miles — had been a source of disappointment to me, but he did not think I had much to grumble about.

"On hearing," he said, "that you purposed ascending the river in steam launches, I freely gave it as my opinion that you would never reach us, and, to tell you the truth, I was agreeably surprised when I got your letter saying you had arrived at Sesheke." This expression of opinion, coming as it did from one whose strength of character, experience, and resourceful method have earned for him a well-deserved position among those who have done much to give effect to the late Mr. Rhodes's imperial schemes, seemed to put a more cheerful aspect on our past exertions.

On the last day of February we proceeded by canoe to Kazungula, from which place I purposed sending messengers to ascertain the whereabouts of Captains Quicke and Hamilton. However, the necessity did not arise, for on entering the camp, the latter greeted us, being to all appearance in the best of health. His garments showed marked signs of wear and tear — certainly it could not be said of him that he looked as though he had just walked out of a bandbox. It appeared they had had an extremely rough and wet experience. We were subsequently amused by the description of his arrival given by a trader. His sole escort was a single boy carrying a blanket and a few odds and ends. His clothes were travel-stained, his feet unprotected except for the remnant of a shoe which hung from one foot; his beard, which had the appearance of not having been trimmed from the day of its inception, served as a halo round the most cheerful of smiles — characteristic of a man who could snap his fingers at discomfort.

"I couldn't for the life of me make him out," continued our informant. "I knew he couldn't be a trader or a prospector, for he said he had only one boy with him."

"What did you think he was?" I inquired.

"Well, to tell the truth, I concluded he must be a missionary just in from a long tramp, until at last he asked me if I knew your whereabouts, and the whole thing came out."

This anecdote is quite characteristic of both my companions. With such a personnel is it surprising that the expedition did not leave Africa till every object had been attained?

A short account and a few extracts from Captain Quicke's diary will best describe the adventures of my two friends from the time we parted:—

The day I bade adieu to Captain Quicke at Makwa, he made arrangements with the chief of that village for the supply of porters sufficient to carry a proportion of the loads forward, and returned with them to Sansa. These rascals on arrival made such exorbitant demands over and above the already too liberal terms arranged, that it was impossible to

accede to them, and as a consequence they left in a body. On this Captain Quicke made a second journey to Makwa, with the object of trying to induce Wanke's son to supply labour at a reasonable figure. This young man professed a desire to render assistance, and undertook to collect boys and personally superintend the carriage of the goods. True to his word the son of Wanke put in an appearance the following day, and with him was a small rabble of his villagers; but these wretched parodies on the human form divine were, that very evening, on their way home again without the loads. No doubt they concluded that the two white men with their two boys were in a hole from which they could not climb without their assistance, and, nigger-like, they thought they saw their way to extortion on a large scale. Four pounds would have been an exorbitant price for the removal of the goods one short day's journey of fifteen miles, but the brazen-faced scoundrel and his coadjutors had the impudence to ask £40.

On the ensuing morning five water-buck were to be seen grazing on the farther bank of the river, and Captain Hamilton, and his boy Presenti, were ferried across and went off in pursuit. The chase was unsuccessful, and the after effects were embarrassing, for on his return to the river the "dugout" was nowhere to be found—it had cast its moorings and been washed downstream. Presenti was a very strong swimmer, but his master's education in this direction had been neglected. The Zambezi flows past Sansa in a swift, eddying stream, but apparently Captain Hamilton did not realise the danger to the swimmer of such a current, for he gave Presenti the direct order to support him as far as the opposite bank. The boy, I am glad to say, demurred, for the chance of his being able to land his master in safety must have been a very remote one. The outcome of his refusal was that he was sent across by himself, with instructions to return with food and a helmet. Master Presenti always had an excellent appetite, and on this occasion he consumed not only his own rations, but also those of

Inchanga, his absent fellow-servant. After the meal he no longer felt inclined to face the river, and settled down in comfortable oblivion of his deserted master until the return of Captain Quicke and his boy. Ultimately, on Inchanga offering to enter the water with him, they faced the stream together. The task was too much for the latter. He was compelled to return, and only just succeeded in making the bank, from which he was dragged by Captain Quicke in an exhausted and half-drowned condition, from which it took him some hours to recover. Presenti effected the crossing all right, but not so the helmet — it was to be seen floating, boatlike, downstream, now dashing forward, now dancing round in a circle as it was caught by some whirling eddy, and then, again settling down to its onward course, it would move swiftly forward.

Captain Hamilton became anxious for the safety of his only helmet, but was powerless to recover it. The servant neither shared his master's anxiety, nor did he evince any inclination to take a third "header" into the river for the sake of a recalcitrant old hat. He was content to join in the exciting chase over the rocky banks. Then, as viewed from the opposite bank, the two were seen to be standing still. They did not appear to be of the same mind. The fact was, the one did not realise the power of the current — the other did. Then in went the boy, the helmet was seized, but for a time it seemed as though the Zambezi would not be lightly robbed of her spoil, and it was only after a frantic effort that Presenti reached the bank once more. Then Captain Quicke describes how his companion, as he started for Makwa — the nearest ferry — was surrounded by a troop of baboons which came down from the hills and watched him pass from a respectful distance, the whole effect of the picture being "too funny for words." But the latter, with only a mouthful of food, no blanket, and a thirty-five-mile tramp in front of him, did not share the mirth. He could see his tent and cooking pots on the other side of the river. He could meditate on the existence of comforts so near and yet so far — but that was all.

And so it is that our experiences in the wide, wide world are occasionally enlivened at the expense of one another. "A" bursts into a roar of laughter as he sees his friend "B" walk into a game-pit and disappear from sight into the bowels of the earth. "B," with feelings of undisguised merriment, from a position of safety, views "A" dancing about in the moonlight as he hastily removes every vestige of clothing in order the better to combat an attack by "soldier" ants — the rude disturbers of pleasant dreams. And in the club at home twelve months later "A" and "B" are equally amused as they recall both incidents.

In his loneliness Captain Quicke went out for a stroll, in the course of which he picked up a tortoise, and this he conceived would make an acceptable meal for his boy.

Striking the river much farther up than he had expected, he found himself still some distance from camp when the sun went down. He endeavoured to reach it by following the outskirts of the medley of rocks which line the river bank, but, as darkness set in, his task became arduous; so on striking a small patch of sand he laid himself down for the night, and, as he lay awake, he thus describes the situation: "I thought of the Major on his way to Sesheke, of Hamilton climbing the rocks on the other side, and the steamer being swept through the rapids. But the tortoise would turn over and crawl away, so I threw him against the rocks, and he cannoned off into the river."

In the early morning he walked into camp, where he found Inchanga in sole possession. His faithful henchman, thinking his master to be lost, had wandered about the bush all night, beating a cooking-pot in order to attract attention and give a clew to direction.

The diary goes on — "At midnight, Presenti turns up, eats everything he can find, and says his master has gone — gone he does not know where." The next morning, however, his mind was set at rest by Captain Hamilton's reappearance. He had taken the wrong path, and, being benighted, had slept in the bush.

On the following day Captain Hamilton made a successful raid on a flock of guinea-fowl, returning to camp with a large bag. For once the boys were able to eat their fill, and their masters enjoyed a good meal.

On the 26th, Sansa — anxious no doubt to be relieved of the necessity of providing food any longer — brought in six boys, with whom he had made arrangements to commence the porterage of the goods to Makwa. Thus with the help of the two servants eight loads were moved. Halfway to Makwa, the Daka River presented a serious obstacle; the river being in flood, four of the boys forthwith returned to their village. After Presenti and Inchanga had transferred load after load to the opposite bank, the remaining two followed, and the eight loads were carried into Makwa in two journeys. Captain Quicke established himself here so as to be the better able to open communication with the porters on their arrival from Marotseland. He made an arrangement with Wanke's son to provide himself and boy with food in return for payment at three shillings a day. The arrangement worked well for the first few days, but, on the fifth, the food instalment not having come in, he went in search of his "contractor." Failing to discover the young rogue's whereabouts, he returned and promptly took possession of that worthy's canoe. The result was an early visit — meal and seven eggs.

On the 3d of February — rather more than three weeks after their departure from Sesheke — the two head men with the porters they had collected arrived on the bank opposite.

Letters and papers — the first news from home for eight months — were sent across the river with the message that the porters must not cross the water, as, if they found themselves on the south bank, they would probably run away to Buluwayo. None the less, by the following afternoon they were all across, shelters erected, fires lighted, and foraging parties sent out. These returned with a goodly supply of melons, which at this late period of the agricultural season seemed to be almost the sole article of food procurable. That day the rains broke with a vengeance, and continued

throughout the night. This very day, also, marked the break in the weather at Mongo, four hundred miles away.

In the morning Captain Quicke led the porters to Sansa. At the Daka crossing he noticed that the water was rising rapidly, so as soon as he could start away with the bulk of the caravan he did so, leaving Captain Hamilton, who was not quite ready, to follow after. The goods were crossed none too soon, and, even as it was, two bales were carried off by the stream, nor were they recovered till they had been washed three hundred yards away. By the time Captain Hamilton reached the river, any attempt at crossing until the floods modified was out of the question. Thus he was kept a prisoner on the eastern bank for a couple of days, and then, the water falling, he was able to proceed to Makwa. No time was now lost in getting the caravan across the Zambezi, and on the 8th of February it started for Sesheke. The rains fell persistently and heavily, streams became rivers, and rivers swelled into seething floods. The route to Sesheke was no longer to be covered by a nine days' journey, as was the case when I travelled it a month earlier. When on the 12th the Kalomo, or eastern Umgwezi River, was reached, it was found to be absolutely impassable. To the Matoka porters this bar to their progress was particularly tantalising. For several days they had subsisted entirely on wild roots or anything else to be found on the veldt, which their omnivorous stomachs would accept as edible. Now, when almost within hail of their villages, they were compelled to sit still and dream of the pots of porridge which steamed but a short day's journey in front. On the 14th a crossing was effected with considerable difficulty, though not before most of the goods, and notably a case of musical boxes designed as presents for Lewanika and some of his relatives, had been wet through and through. Next day the villages were reached. Food was plentiful, and both head men and carriers became demoralised and scattered to the various villages. For five days the camp was practically deserted, the head men merely putting in an

occasional appearance, while the rank and file gorged and slept and drank at one village or another. At this juncture Captain Hamilton volunteered to find his way to Kazungula. His attempt to engage local boys to accompany him failed through the wiles of the head men. These worthies realised that to place one of the white men in direct communication with Letia might not be quite in accord with their immediate interests. Captain Hamilton, however, was not going to allow any such consideration to defeat his design. With characteristic indifference to his own comfort, he left camp with his one boy, and with only a vague idea of the distance to Kazungula, or its whereabouts; but, as we have seen, he got there none the less.

As it was known at Kazungula that the country between that place and Sesheke was to a great extent under water, and that the rivers were much swollen, I at once despatched Jack, the interpreter, with a letter to Captain Quicke, directing him to join us at the former village, in which case we would not return to Sesheke, but would start on our respective journeys direct. Whilst at Kazungula, yet another incident occurred demonstrating the impudence of which the crocodile can at times be guilty.

Old April, the father of Jack, to whom reference was made in an earlier chapter, dwells on an island a few hundred yards from the village. His hut is within a compound standing some fifteen yards from the water's edge. In the quiet hours of the night he was aroused by the angry barking of his dogs, and on quitting his hut he found himself within three paces of a crocodile, which without doubt had come ashore to see how far he could vary his natural fish diet with something more substantial. So far from being scared by the appearance of man, the brute allowed April to return to the hut for his rifle, and only on receiving a bullet, did he consent to quit the compound, and this he did closely pursued by a pack of barking curs. Next morning the blood spoor showed that the reptile had received a hint that he had best keep to the water in future. Within a few days

prior to this incident one of April's sheep had been taken, and the leg of a donkey had been badly mauled. Moreover, at Kazungula, a few months earlier, a crocodile had entered a hut occupied by a sleeping native, and, seizing him in his powerful jaws, dragged him to the river where he disappeared with his prey.

On the 5th of March a letter from Mr. Weller, written at the Kafukwe-Zambezi confluence, and dated January 9, was handed to me. It had found its way across country to the newly established police station at Monze in Matoka-land, and had thence been forwarded by a runner bearing despatches for Mr. Coryndon. This letter reeked with bad news, and gave the first intimation that we would probably be cut off from our main supplies. The launch reached the Kafukwe on January 8, which was the ninth day of her return passage. No difficulty in navigation had been experienced, as the river had risen considerably, and many of the smaller rapids were completely submerged, while the stream in other cases, being distributed over greater space, was no longer fraught with risks of disaster. The letter went on to state that the writer found Mr. Alexander awaiting him at the Kafukwe with a barge in which he had ascended the river. Then came the passage: "Muller was taken ill with dysentery at Tete, but did his best to push on, and was last heard of in a dying condition at Cachombe." Poor old Muller — one of the best and soundest of men! We earnestly hoped against hope that the state of his health had been exaggerated, as is so often the case in Africa, where news is handed on through the medium of several mouths. Then the letter went on to say that "Alexander brought all the things to Zumbo, and worked well," and then, "Alexander and company are going home," but as that gentleman had not written or sent a message to me, I did not accept the suggestion of his departure as definite. In conclusion he stated that his own health had completely broken down, and that he might be compelled to return to England, as in his present condition he did not feel equal to the task of directing the

expedition alone and single-handed. "If," he continued, "I can get the goods to Monze's by hook or by crook, I will. . . . If you hear nothing, you will know I have gone home — England, or a better!" Gallant young fellow! I knew he would not leave us in the lurch if there was any possibility of his being able to press forward. If we were to be cut off from our supplies, it certainly would not be through any fault of his.

This letter, as may be imagined, turned us sad and thoughtful. To be cut off in this manner from all the conveniences and comforts that had cost so much thought and trouble to accumulate, and to be deprived of the use of the launches at a time when these had performed by far the most difficult part of their task, were matters of serious inconvenience, but they were trifling in the face of the physical misfortune which had befallen two of the soundest members of the expedition, whose enthusiasm and loyalty we knew to be of the highest order. Having seen our two friends tested in the hardest of schools, and learnt to admire the unselfish and conscientious motives that governed their conduct when everything looked black and discouraging, I had hitherto been absolutely confident that the programme, so far as it affected the section of the expedition under their control, would be carried out to the letter. Nothing short of death, severe illness, or physical impossibility — and the latter is difficult to find in the face of determined action — could prevent their coming to our rescue, knowing as they did that we had only six months' provisions with us. Yet such is fate! Both these men, at the same instant, seemed to be struck down with disease and threatened with death. Man proposes, God disposes. Come what may, if only granted health and strength, we would yet attain every object for which we had left England. Fortunately things had altered since my previous travels in the Upper Zambezi basin. Mr. Coryndon had entered the country with a small staff of white men, and he at once offered to do what he could for us in the matter of necessaries, should the worst come to the worst.

On the following day Mr. Jervoise, a young man who had come to the Zambezi for purposes of trade, informed me that he contemplated a journey to Buluwayo and back. He anticipated an absence of three months, and kindly offered to bring back with him any goods I might require. I gave him a list of our requirements, and also asked him to purchase a dozen pack donkeys on my behalf.

Then came news from Captain Quicke. Jack had failed to catch him until he had broken the back of his journey. He had therefore proceeded to Sesheke, and there awaited further news of our movements.

It appeared that the day after Captain Hamilton had set out for Kazungula, Captain Quicke unearthed his head man in a neighbouring village, where he seemed to have been enjoying himself after his own fashion, and was still in an advanced state of intoxication. On the following afternoon some of the porters put in an appearance, but heavy rain prevented a continuance of the journey before morning. By then the remaining porters came in, camp was struck, and there commenced thirteen days of travel under most disagreeable conditions — rain, swamps, swollen rivers, and troublesome boys. The head men, realising that they would shortly be face to face with their lord and master, pulled themselves together, and meted out severe punishment to any recalcitrant porter who dared to be guilty of conduct such as they themselves had revelled in but a few days earlier. To be late in starting was now a most serious offence, and those boys who lingered too long in any village passed *en route* received exemplary punishment. The resource of these Matoka porters in the absence of better food was very striking — "tadpoles of all sorts, . . . the young of birds, old, dried-up wax and honey — nothing escapes them, nothing comes amiss." One evening after shelters had been erected, the foragers scoured the country as usual in search of anything they could lay their hands on. More fortunate than usual, they brought in the remains of a zebra, killed by lions the previous night. It was already growing dark, but Captain

Quicke could not rest without making an effort to dispute with the lions their right to exist.

In a short three months through Somaliland, twelve lions had fallen to his rifle, but as yet he had not so much as seen one during eight months' travels through much more remote regions. All that could be gathered from the short account of the incident he gave was that he encountered what he supposed to be a lion in the dusk, walked close up to it, and fired. Ignorant of the result, or of what might follow his action, he stood for some time with his rifle "at the charge," ready for an emergency, for the outline of a lion, which he supposed to be the beast at which he had fired, was to be seen gliding about in the background. It was always the hardest thing in the world to get Captain Quicke to discuss any topic which he thought might reflect credit upon himself, and now, poor fellow! his mouth is closed forever. All he writes in his diary of what must have been an exciting incident is, "Shot a lioness in the dark, very pleased with my boy leading head men and natives in the dark, having heard my shot from camp." It transpired that as he stood expectant, the dead lioness lay within six feet of him, obscured partly by the darkness and partly by the remains of the zebra. Spoor discovered on the following morning showed that a male lion had walked backward and forward ten or fifteen yards beyond. It is fortunate that the mate of the dead lioness had been content to remain inactive, for in lion-hunting night robs man of every advantage, and invests the beast with a proportionate power to attack successfully. Next day Captain Quicke bagged a zebra and a water-buck, and after this, in order to allow the boys to eat to their heart's content, he gave them twenty-four hours' rest. During the ensuing night the old lion wandered round and round the camp, but kept far enough afield to defeat any attempt to take possession of his skin. As for his mate, the boys devoured her carcass in accordance with the belief that lion flesh imparts something of the strength of that animal to the system it feeds.

Nevertheless, after wandering through reedy swamps the

greater part of the following day, they came in "dead tired," and camped on a mound immediately clear of the water which inundated the plain for miles around. In the course of that day Jack arrived with my note, but as the worst of the journey I had hoped to spare my companion was over, he wisely decided to proceed to Sesheke. Next day, being the 5th of March, wading was continued, and the Kasaia River was crossed in water shoulder deep. On the 6th the Machili was passed. In the plain this river loses all pretensions to a definite bed and expands into a far-reaching, swampy flood. Whilst wading through this, Captain Quicke tells how his head man released him from "a ludicrous position." Both feet having sunk in the sticky mud, they became so firmly implanted, that do what he would, he was powerless to move. From this position he was hauled by his head man by main force before he once more found himself master of his own movements.

That night he and his followers slept in comparative luxury at a village standing on ground high and dry, and the next day found him at the end of a thirty days' journey as hard, disagreeable, and worrying as it was possible for man to endure. Fortunately neither of my companions was any the worse for this wet and worrying experience. Both were brimful of pluck, and not easily cast down. They had thrown in their lot with mine for better or worse, and when I say that throughout a long and intimate association I never so much as heard a suggestion of a complaint or grumble from either, those who know what an irritating effect the African climate so frequently exerts on the human temperament can best appreciate my good fortune in the matter of companionship. It is remarkable how the true character of the man comes to the surface in such circumstances. Removed as he is from the restraints of conventional civilisation, the veneer of mannerism and the cloak of discretion are often rudely broken and torn asunder by the violence of unbridled instincts. The sound, honourable man stands out with all the force of unaffected manhood, the unprincipled character is

laid bare in all its naked ugliness, and the dissolute sinks into pitiful degradation. Both sides of human nature have been so forcibly before me on various occasions, that I am driven to the conclusion that man is seldom what he appears to be in the ordinary walks of life — he is either better or worse.

CHAPTER XII

All assembled at SESHEKE—Captain Quicke visits Mr. CORYNDON and the Victoria Falls—Ready for work—The plan of campaign—A start—The Zambezi inundations—On the south bank—A domestic comedy—Full flesh pots in a poor district—Germany's white elephant—Arrival at MAMILI—The chief MAMILI—His preparations and hospitality—An interesting old man—His sixty years of history—Livingstone's first advent—A correction corrected—The "MAKOLOLO" of British Central Africa—A handsome kaross—The art of bargaining—Another Kaffir dog—His shrewdness and success—His downfall—The native and the book—The map and its use—Incredulity—Demonstration and wonder—Belated head men arrive—Luombomba and his fluency—Litsolo and his past—Niangana of the MAKWENGARI—A slayer of white men—LUOMBOMBA'S timidity and hypocrisy—The young CHIMBA-UN-GUNDU—Mamili's domestic circle—A shirker requited—Excellent subsequent effect

CHAPTER XII

SESHEKE TO MAMILI

By the 21st of March we had been together at Sesheke for eight days, loads had been divided, and each was ready — physically and otherwise — for the long journey before him. Captain Quicke after visiting Mr. Coryndon, whom we had left behind at Kazungula, would make a short trip to the Victoria Falls, and then ascend the Zambezi as far as Lialui, taking with him those goods which would not be required for our first journeys. He would then travel west till he reached the Kubangui-Kwando confluence, where the three of us hoped to rendezvous toward the end of May. Subsequently he would follow the Kwando to its source, thence march in a northeasterly direction till he struck the Lungwebungu, which he would trace to its confluence with the Zambezi on his way back to Lialui. Captain Hamilton would travel with me in a southeastern direction until we struck the Kwando in its lower waters, would then trace its course to the Kubangui, and work his way eastward to Lialui by a route lying to the south of that followed by Captain Quicke. My own route would be determined by what I found to be the boundary of Lewanika's dominions. How far west would depend on circumstances, but for the early stages the Okavango and Kwito rivers would probably represent the line of route.

Early in the morning our goods (Hamilton's and mine) were sent by the north bank of the river to a point fourteen miles away, where the country lying to the south is less swampy than is generally the case in this section of the river. We ourselves followed later in canoes. Owing to the floods, the loads had to be brought to the main stream through three

miles of swamp. In consequence, when we arrived at our destination, our goods, with the exception of a tent which had been brought over in a small canoe, were still separated from us by a wide expanse of inundated plain. Very contrary to the inclination of the paddlers, I insisted on the canoes crossing at once, and bringing over at least one relay of loads. As the moon was well-nigh full, it mattered little if they were belated, as indeed they were bound to be, for it was already five o'clock. The first lot arrived at two o'clock in the morning, and the boats left for the remainder before sunrise, returning shortly after midday.

We were now clear away, and on the threshold of the special work for which we had left home. The season of the year was most favourable, as the rains were well-nigh over, and the bright, cloudless nights of the high veldt winter would make it possible to take observations almost nightly. As the ensuing three or four months would be perhaps the most important, from a geographical standpoint, the fact of our being a couple of months later than I had anticipated had at least one redeeming feature.

We struck camp as soon as the goods were together, and by the following morning had traversed the wide plain which borders on the river, and entered the forest beyond.

In the early morning of the succeeding day, Captain Hamilton and his boy introduced a little novelty into the routine of domestic life, which perhaps amused me more than it did the sufferer by the incident. It was the custom of each of us to make his early morning porridge over night, and that was warmed up by the boys at early dawn. In this instance, so far as Captain Hamilton was concerned, this arrangement was efficiently carried out, but unfortunately he consigned the wrong pot to his boy for the early morning operation. In due course the servant raised the lid in order that his master should help himself. But alas! instead of porridge, a second aluminium vessel was found to be within, and in it were the simmering remains of numerous odds and ends — a cookie had been fried in melted candle ends, and flavoured with

a mixture of quinine, ipecacuanha, croton oil, and other abominations.

The country through which we passed the next few days was neither interesting nor suggestive of industrial development. The soil was poor and without effective water supply. Till '96 the district was rich in the numbers and variety of its game. It supplied me with many of my best trophies in '95, but then came the rinderpest, and to-day there is very little game to be found. We bagged a tsessebe and a couple of wildebeest, but saw little else. This, however, served to fill the fleshpots until we reached Mamili on the 26th.

It will be remembered that the general territorial rearrangement between Germany and England, which culminated in what is generally known as the "Heligoland Treaty," allotted to Germany a narrow strip of territory bounded by the Kwando or Linyante on the south, which would give German trade access to the Upper Zambezi. This clause of the treaty was merely one of those little pleasantries whereby the governments of the past delighted in introducing foreign competition into the vast fields which irresponsible British subjects have, in the teeth of Downing Street, added to the Empire.

It was through this strip that we were now travelling. What a white elephant Germany, by the accident of circumstances, has added to her territorial acquisitions! It is one of the poorest districts that have come under my notice. It is partly composed of flats which are as dry as a bone in winter, and huge, mosquito-infested swamps in summer, and partly of small-tree forest, in which water cannot be found summer or winter. To connect Damaraland by rail with the Zambezi through this district may, in these days, be said to be possible, though it would necessarily be a most costly undertaking, but by the time the Zambezi was reached, it would be found that communication was opened to the only section of that river which is absolutely valueless. For one hundred miles above, and two hundred below, a succession of rapids entirely cuts off the navigable reaches to the north and

east, and any railway which may connect these two sections in the future will necessarily be by the shortest route, and not within a great many miles — probably three hundred — of this absurd map-made acquisition by a foreign power.

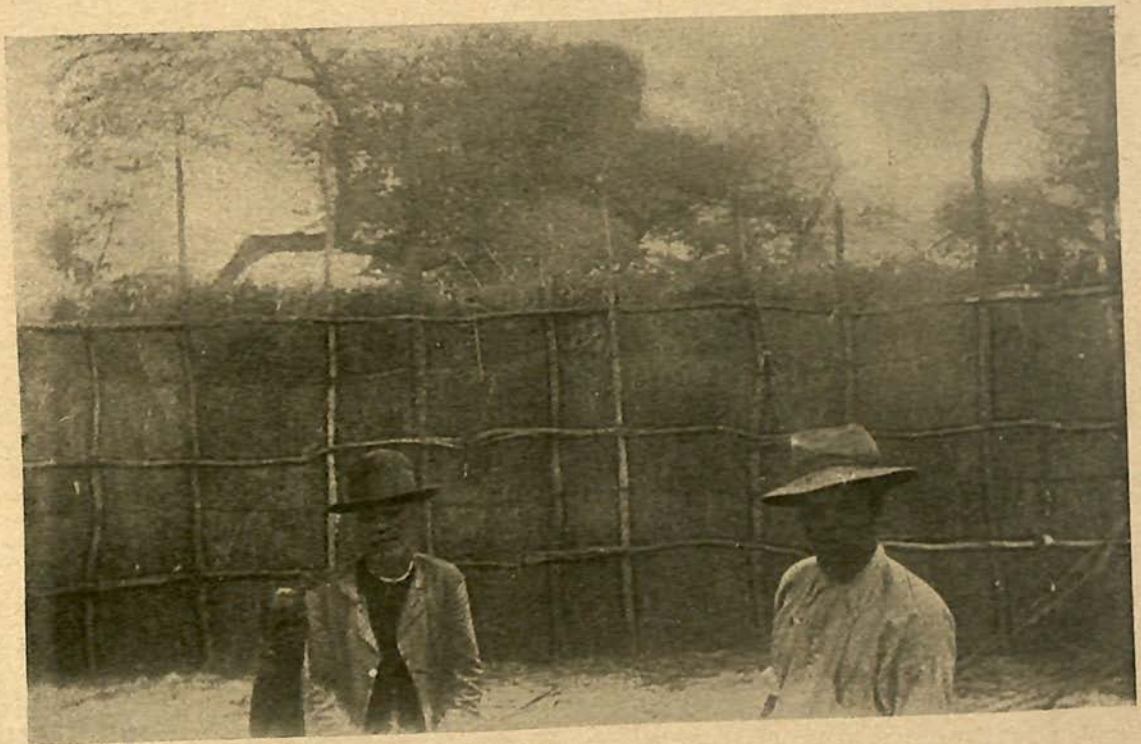
At Mamili we expected to find the chiefs and head men provided by Lewanika to escort us on our respective journeys; but it was for us to await the arrival of these casual gentry. The chief, Mamili, a kindly, good-natured old man of medium height, and with grey hair and beard, greeted us most respectfully, and led the way to the quarters he had prepared for our accommodation.

A road about one hundred yards long by ten wide had been cut from the village to a circular clearing, in the centre of which a fence of grass in a wooden framework enclosed a circular courtyard, sixty feet in diameter. Three-quarters of this enclosure was neatly strewn with dried grass, and at the end farthest from the entrance was an elongated hut thirty feet long by eight feet wide.

I expressed my appreciation of the preparations made for our reception and comfort, and congratulated the old man on the neatness of the work. All this was received by Mamili and his companions with the clapping of hands and bending of necks, which constitutes a chief's salute among the Marotse.

However, our old friend had not done yet, for shortly after he had taken his departure, a present of a young ox, about one hundred pounds of meal, and a melon were brought in, and with it came a message that fresh milk would be sent us night and morning.

I found Mamili to be a most interesting old man. Morning and evening he would repair to our compound, and we would talk together on divers subjects. Usually I would pick his brains in matters affecting the past history and present conditions of the country; but occasionally he exhibited a desire for information, and would question me on the marvels of civilisation with its locomotives, telegraphs, and ocean-going steamers. The great white Queen, the many peoples over whom she held sway, and the kindly interest she took in all her subjects,



Old Mamili and Jack

whether white or black, formed a topic as interesting to the old Marotse chief as it was gratifying to myself.

My old friend was a pure-bred Marotse, and in the reign of Sekeletu, the Makololo chief, he had been a servant in the royal household. When the Marotse dynasty once more acceded to power, Sepopa, the first king of the restored line, appointed him chief of Mamili, so that he must have held his present post for some thirty-five years.

On the assassination of Ratau, alluded to in an earlier chapter, he succeeded to the position of head of the Kothla in the Sesheke district.

When Livingstone first visited the country "with another white man and one wife," in the days of Sekeletu's father, Sebitwane, he carried the first message from the doctor to the Makololo chief, asking his permission to enter the country, and took back a message of welcome. This was over sixty years ago, and he was then "a man killing game and fighting," so that he is probably eighty or thereabouts to-day. Apart from information appertaining to the history of the people, which is embodied in the previous chapter, Mamili also shed light on two topics which may be regarded as of some interest.

On the authority of my missionary friends in '95 I stated in "Exploration and Hunting in Central Africa," that the lower reaches of the Kwando, which are marked "Chobe" on the English maps, and are known by the local natives as "Linyante," from the old Makololo capital which stood near the river, have never been known in the country by the name of "Chobe," which is therefore a misnomer, and as such should be abandoned. I went on to suggest that since both locally and in England three-quarters of the course of this river is known as Kwando, this is obviously the name which should distinguish it on the maps to the exclusion both of Linyante and Chobe.

Mamili denied that there ever was a chief of the name of Chobe on or near the river within the memory of man, but that in his younger days quite an insignificant Makalahari

chief, called Chobisa, had a village on the south bank a few miles below his town. "It must be," he said, "from Chobisa that the name Chobe came, as his is the only one in any way resembling it." However, whether it be Chobe or Chobisa is a matter of small moment, but I take this opportunity of again suggesting the abandonment of a name which means nothing. It seems to me to be beyond dispute that the less meaningless names, or names locally unknown, are applied to rivers, mountains, and existing places, the better for those who have to use maps as guides, or ascertain their whereabouts through the medium of native information.

It may be interesting to ethnologists to know, from a man who was a member of Sekeletu's household when that chief provided Livingstone with the caravan with which he finally left the country, that the descendants of the men composing that caravan — the so-called Makololo tribe of the British Central African Protectorate — have not a drop of Makololo blood in their veins.

"There was only one Makololo," insisted Mamili, "and his name was Sequebu. He was the only chief who went with Monare [Livingstone], and all Makololo were chiefs. The others were gathered together from different tribes just as your people are; there were Matoka, Matotela, Masubia, and Marotse. I saw them leave and knew where they all came from. But they are all dead now," he continued, "for nothing has been heard of them from that day to this."

The old man was very interested on hearing that so far from being dead, these people had taken to themselves wives, had settled many months' journey away and become quite an important tribe in another country over which the great white Queen rules, but that Sequebu, while on a voyage to England with Monare, had become mad and jumped from the ship into the sea, where he was drowned.

Two days after our arrival at Sesheke a messenger arrived from the Mokwetunga, husband of Akanongiswa. He brought with him a kaross, to which I had taken a special liking, also a letter stating that as I had taken such a fancy

to it, he had decided to let me have it at the price I had offered, but that he would not part with it for so small a sum to any one else than myself, and so forth. The kaross is certainly one of the handsomest things of its sort I have seen. Two or three hundred "cepa" (a species of civet) tails, barred with white, red brown, and blue black, are neatly stitched together, and being specially selected and well matched, form a very effective rug, free from all appearance of patchiness on the fur side. The inside bears witness to the almost incredible amount of care in detail bestowed in its construction. I had offered the young couple a very good price, but they tried by argument and flattery to sell it to me at half as much again, and now, having failed to make so favourable a bargain, they were willing as a mark of special favour to allow me to purchase it at its proper value. Every stage of the negotiations and purchase has its counterpart in civilised Europe.

At a very early date a Kaffir dog discovered that the hut was utilised as a convenient place to keep everything not required for immediate use. Meat and milk, secured as far as possible against such raids, were stored here, and we ourselves occupied tents. However, the tight-fitting lid on the aluminium bucket was no more proof against the Mamili dogs than against his fellow-cur of Sesheke. For safer keeping the milk on the next evening was placed in my tent within a couple of feet of my head. This arrangement acted admirably for two nights, but on the third I awoke to find every drop consumed. The lid being immovable, the wily animal had in some way tilted the can, lapped up the milk as it oozed out, and left no sign of any having been spilled on the waterproof tent flooring. At the moment I awoke he was just turning his attention to a second pan. As I sprang to my feet he bolted, and a revolver shot, wide of the mark, followed him. I obtained leave of Mamili to encompass the brute's destruction. A bright moonlight night favoured my designs. My visitor arrived at 10 P.M. After having drawn blank in my tent, he slowly and noiselessly

approached the hut doorway. As he peered round the corner I sprang from my hiding-place. At first he took cover behind the hut, whence he was driven by the boys to receive a charge of shot as he made his last bid for life. As at Sesheke, so here, this single lesson sufficed to secure us against further persecution in this direction.

In entertaining Mamili and his head men, by showing the illustrations in my previous book, I was myself highly entertained by the keen interest these pictures created. They recognised many friends in the photographs, were conversant, though in an exaggerated form, with some of the more exciting incidents illustrated, and showed a special appreciation of the representations of game, recognising, without difficulty, each species portrayed—a circumstance which must be a source of satisfaction to my friend, Mr. Charles Whymper, the artist.

In explaining the map I endeavoured to illustrate its value to other white men, by stating that it enabled those who had never been in the country before to go straight to places they had never seen.

"Where is Lebebe?" one incredulous young man inquired.

"There."

"And the Kubangui?"

"There."

"And Lialui?"

"There." And so I pointed accurately in the direction of a dozen places—a very simple effort, but one which called forth undisguised surprise from my unsophisticated audience.

At length the missing chiefs and their retinue arrived. Two second-class and four third-class chiefs had been allotted to me, and one of the former and two of the latter to Captain Hamilton.

My senior chief, Luombomba, was a well set-up fellow with a handsome face to some extent marred by an upward cast in one eye, and was very black. His fluency was his striking characteristic. When the spirit moved him—as it did on every possible occasion—he would discuss matters in a

voice so sonorous and with eloquence so glib as would move the most talkative political busybody to envy, but unfortunately, as is too often the case with everlasting talkers, his tongue had no counterpart in his actions.

Litsolo, my second chief, was a copper-coloured refugee from the Batawana — the Lake Ngami branch of the Bechuana tribe. On the death of Moreme, his former chief, he supported the rightful heir, a mere boy, against the claims of Sekome, the ruling chief, a son of Moreme by a concubine. Sekome's success was Litsolo's undoing, and to save his life he fled to Lewanika for protection. An exceptional hunter, and a man of intelligence and activity, he was soon raised to the ranks of the Marotse chieftainship, and on account of his thorough knowledge of the country and people on the south-west of the king's dominions, he was attached to my expedition.

Next came Muiäöanyoka, to whom I shall, for the sake of brevity, refer as Mianyoka. Then Sefunganyambe, a middle-aged dandy, and Lefatse, a good-looking youth who was always ready to do what was asked of him, and lastly a lanky, self-conscious young man of light colour, the son of a Mashikolumbwe captive, who had risen to chief's rank in the land of his captivity. His name was Kalima. The slaves of these gentlemen swelled my caravan to something over one hundred.

As the day of departure approached, these men assembled in the enclosure and asked for more detailed knowledge of my plans. Niangana, the chief of the Makwengari, whom Lewanika had described as "worse than the Mashikolumbwe," and who had enticed a white trader named Weisel within his stockade and there murdered him, was apparently looked upon as being an undesirable acquaintance.

"Do you take us through the Makwengari country?" asked Luombomba.

"If his country is on the Kwito, I do."

"They are very bad people; they kill white men."

"That is no reason why they should kill me when they see I do not come as an enemy."

"But if they try to stop you, shall you turn back?"

"Certainly not; I will still pass through the country."

"But what if they fight?"

"I will fight too, if they compel me to do so."

"But they will have more men than we."

"The small number often wins against the large."

Luombomba sighed.

"Now," I continued, "you know what I expect of you. If any of you are afraid to come with me, you may go home and you shall take a letter to Lewanika saying that I send you back, as he has sent too many chiefs."

"No," Luombomba replied. "You mistake the reason for my questions. We only wanted to know your plans. If you fight, we will fight too. If you die, we will die with you, for we cannot face Lewanika unless we bring you back to him alive."

And thenceforward the speaker of these brave and loyal words set about to hamper my movements, and if possible to prevent my entering the Makwengari country. As for myself, in the past, bloodthirsty savages, hunger, and thirst had ever been *in front* of me and had invariably faded into spectre form on approach, like the friends of the shepherd in the fable. I had learned to lay but little stress on all such prospective inconveniences.

Mamili had a small, two-year-old child, a son of his old age, to whom he was particularly devoted, and from whom he was never separated. In response to his expressed wish, I consented to his naming this little black morsel Chimba-un-gundu —a collection of sounds which signifies myself among those people.

The boy Rupia, one of our slender staff of permanent servants, caused some anxiety by contracting a severe attack of dysentery. Fearing that hard marching might prove deleterious, I made arrangements with Mamili that he should remain with him until quite sound and fit to travel, when he should take the first opportunity to forward him to Lialui, there to await my arrival. The boy, who had quite decided in his own mind that he had not long to disport himself in

this world, demurred strongly to the suggestion; so, feeling that at all events I could dose him and see that he kept to farinaceous food if he accompanied us, I allowed him to have his own way.

On the 4th of April everything was ready for a start. I paid a last visit to the village to bid the old chief farewell, and took the opportunity of photographing a group of his wives, — the old rascal suffered from twenty-five, — but unfortunately the result has not done justice to this bevy of grace and beauty.

On the allotment of loads I was compelled to teach my boys a lesson at the expense of one of them. This boy, Sabou, complained of the weight of the load I had told off to him. On examination I found that it contained a few pots, *etc.*, belonging to himself and his companions, and a mere trifle besides; the whole weighing about twenty-five pounds.

"If you do not wish to carry it, you need not," I said, and beckoning him toward a group of carriers, I picked out the heaviest load I could find, weighing sixty pounds.

"You shall carry this for three days," I continued, "and if, at the end of that time, you think you would prefer your own pots, you shall have them."

The newly engaged porter was of course delighted. Sabou looked foolish, and his fellows were always ready to jeer at him and crack jokes at his expense, as, with the heavy box on his head, he trudged into camp at the end of a long march. Thus the would-be shirker got little sympathy from his fellows, but he had three days to meditate on the folly of not letting well alone. I have always found that unreasonable discontent, laziness, neglect, and such shortcomings are more effectively dealt with by some such measure as the one illustrated, than by word of mouth on the one hand, or the too free use of the sjambok on the other. Certainly, this method answered admirably on the person in question, for hereafter Sabou, though naturally stupid, always showed a very ready desire to comply with my instructions as though they were almost a pleasure to himself.

CHAPTER XIII

The LINYANTE swamps—Old Linyante, the Makololo capital—A battlefield—The victor's death place—Skirting the inundations—Captain Hamilton diverges—The KWANDO crossed—Three deserters—Swamps and snakes—MAKALAHARI villages—The MAG'WEKWANA—A puzzling conundrum—A hundred miles of wilderness—Meeting the Okavango overflow—Four days' march through water—A vast inundation—The reward of the mischief maker—Litsolo lamed—Luombomba's obstruction—An old, old platitude—The son of an exile—The penalty of royal popularity—The primeval Okavango—The influence of the centuries—Professor Gregory's opinion—Another effect of the Okavango overflow—Vast reservoirs—Mr. Reid's theory—A sacked village—An illicit love affair—Its developments—And tragic result—Reunited families—The African's lack of gratitude—On the Okavango River—Mampukushu settlers and the Maiye—Their respective characteristics—Thorns or water—Game and locusts

CHAPTER XIII

THE KWANDO, OKAVANGO, AND KWITO RIVERS

THE journey along the vast swamp into which the Kwando opens, was anything but pleasant. Low-lying, damp, and infested by mosquitoes, which paid special attention to one whilst taking observations, there was neither compensation in game nor well-favoured landscape.

As we approached the site of the old town of Linyante, once the capital of the Makololo dynasty, the imaginative faculties create a certain interest. Litsolo pointed out the battlefield on which Bololo, the Makololo general, vanquished the Marotse army seventy-five years ago, and thereby prepared the way for the alien interregnum under which the country was governed till the late 'sixties. Then came the tree under which Sebitwane, the first of that dynasty, breathed his last at the close of a long, adventurous, and successful career. The confines of the old town covered a considerable area in those days, but is now replaced by three small reed-built hamlets. After tracing for four days the outskirts of the Linyante inundations, where the Kwando opens into a huge shallow lake, studded with reed beds and alluvial islands, and stretching in its widest dimensions something over twenty miles, we arrived at the head of this watery expanse. Here the river is confined between dry banks from which crossing in canoes is a matter of no difficulty. Captain Hamilton now started on his journey to the north, following the left bank, while I crossed to the opposite side in 18° 7′ 30″ south latitude. The true course of the river is deep at this point, and not more than seventy yards in width. Beyond is a marshy island much broken by swampy

reed beds. We spent the night on this island, and next morning awoke to find that three of the newly engaged porters had decamped, after having tampered with one of my wheaten meal bags. I did not delay to send after these deserters, as I considered it more important to hurry on, and as soon as possible place a reasonable distance between ourselves and the district from which the boys were recruited. So we did a good march in a southerly direction, toward the end of which I had the good fortune to kill a couple of zebra, which had the effect of establishing a feeling of contentment among the porters.

Snakes are very much in evidence in this district. I do not recollect ever encountering so many of these reptiles in so short a time as I did during the few days we skirted these lower Kwando swamps. By far the most common is the puff adder.

We continued our southerly course till the 10th, when we passed through the last of a cluster of Makalahari villages, known collectively as Rumbwa. The inhabitants belong to Lewanika and are the southernmost of his subjects. Their chiefs protested their loyalty, and stated that they had lived in security under the Marotse kings and their predecessors, the Makololo, since the first arrival of Sebitwane (about 1825).

Next morning, after engaging three boys to take the place of the deserters, the direction was altered to southwest, and before long we struck the dry bed of what seemed to have been at one time a river of considerable dimensions. This is known as the Mag'wekwana (with a "click" after the *g*), and at this time of the year — the middle of April — its one noticeable and very eccentric feature is that the bed, which is in places over one hundred yards wide, is as dry as a bone, even in its depressions; while at intervals along the banks is a series of "vleys" or pans which, as would be expected at the close of the wet season, were full of water. To me the conundrum at the time was — Why was the Mag'wekwana bed an exception to the rule? This "river," I was told, is connected with the Okavango in its western and the

Kwando in its eastern extremity. If ever it contains water, why should it not now? What could it mean? It bears on the face of it evidence of existence for centuries past. Could this be the original bed of the Okavango? And was that river at one time part of the Zambezi system? I would follow its course and answer the question on the experience of the next few days.

On the fifth day of the journey up the Mag'wekwana, we entered on what was expected to be a long, waterless march, with the possibility of not being able to reach a vley that night. However, after travelling for thirteen miles, our attention was arrested by the sight of myriads of water-fowl soaring in the air and circling round and round at a spot eight hundred yards in front. My chiefs grunted their disapproval, and informed me that the water was coming. At first I did not grasp the purport of this remark, but in less than ten minutes we were ankle deep in a slow flow of water which advanced over the parched, and now wider and less well-defined, bed of the Mag'wekwana as it travelled steadily eastward. An overflow of the Okavango was in progress, and that river was stretching forth an arm which would shortly bring its waters into contact with the great Zambezi system. But why should this overflow occur at so late a date, when the rains were almost over, and at a time when the Zambezi floods had already commenced to recede? From what I could gather, the rains in the western Okavango districts begin rather earlier than in the Zambezi basin, but do not continue to a later date. Thus an earlier and not a later flood would be expected. This supplied a problem which I believe I am able to solve in the light of subsequent experience.

For the ensuing four days we waded through a vast expanse of flooded ground, sometimes ankle deep, sometimes wet to the armpits, but usually to just below the knee. With the water came the mosquito, its irritating sting and more irritating buzz. At night camp was made on any mound still remaining uncovered by the rising flood. As we advanced, the definite bed either ceased to exist or was lost in

the now far-spreading overflow, for the whole country, as far as the eye could reach, was now inundated to right and left; only here and there, where small patches of ground stood permanently above the high-water level, trees and brushwood, now in full foliage, broke the landscape and supplied unlimited fuel for the camp-fire.

The natives say the floods continue for "two moons," after which the water gradually drains off into the Kwando, leaving vleys and swamps, which in their turn dry up and disappear until refilled by the succeeding inundations.

On the 15th of April we travelled throughout the day along a narrow, wooded ridge, on which were scattered several small villages — the first habitations of man met with since leaving Rumbwa, from which we had now marched nearly one hundred miles.

Whilst resting at a village called Kangaruru, which is inhabited by immigrant Mampukushu from Lebebe's country, my chiefs attacked an individual, first scolding him in angry tones, then buffeting him. After restoring peace, I inquired the reason for this onslaught, and was told that the miscreant, who had been in the Mamili district when the expedition assembled, had hastened to Kangaruru, and spread a report that raiding and pillage were the aims with which we were entering the country. I considered that the man, who, in evident anticipation of further summary treatment, cowered on the ground in front of me, deserved everything he had got.

Next morning difficulties arose in the way of progress. Litsolo had staked the side of his leg, and a festering sore was the result of the wound. Luombomba jumped at this excuse for delay, and insisted that we must wait two or three days until the leg was better. Such a delay might cut us off from the northern bank for weeks, as the water was rising rapidly. Under no circumstances could the suggestion be entertained, and I insisted on proceeding at once. Then Luombomba, when he saw that Litsolo was quite prepared to make the best of it, descended to the old, old latitude that there was no food in front, and it was necessary to



A Midday Rest

collect a stock in the neighbouring villages, which would necessitate a halt of a few days. I had seen a considerable amount of grain brought into camp on the previous evening, and strongly suspected that the man's sole object was to keep us where we were until the floods rendered advance impossible, when he anticipated that a retreat would be the only course left open to me. I spoke my mind very freely, and gave him to understand that a very little more obstruction on his part would see him on his way back to Burotse by himself, the bearer of a letter explaining his conduct to Lewanika. I dressed Litsolo's leg and bound it up. To do him justice, he was quite prepared to march, and recognised the necessity of pressing forward. I gave him the option of doing so or of remaining where he was for a few days and then following us to Lebebe, where I would give him seven days' grace.

Before starting I received a visit from one Sinunga, a Batawana chief from Lake Ngami, and with him I had a conversation of some interest. He was a Makololo by birth, and on this occasion was on a tour collecting tribute for his master, Sekome. It is generally understood that the Marotse, when they rebelled against their Makololo rulers, forty years ago, "wiped out" to a man all but a few survivors, who made good their escape and fled to Lechuletebe, chief of the Batawana and grandfather of Sekome; that subsequently Lechuletebe murdered these refugees, and that with the exception of a few women the whole tribe of Makololo was annihilated. It appears that this account is an exaggeration of fact. Sinunga stated that his father, Kakala, was a chief of pure Makololo blood, and was one of the refugees in question. At first these, among whom were one or two chiefs of the blood, became so popular with the people of the Lake that the Batawana chief grew uneasy in his mind and feared lest his subjects should dethrone him in favour of one of the scions of the Makololo house. To anticipate any such attempt, he resorted to the crude but effective methods of the assassin. Every member of Sebitwane's house was murdered, but their

retinue, from which nothing was to be feared, were left unmolested.

By the 17th we had cleared the Mag'wekwana, and were camped on dry ground to the north, near the site of Bietcha, a small village which had quite recently been the scene of one of those cruel tragedies which are unhappily far from uncommon in uncivilised Africa.

Before referring to this sensational drama, we will discuss the physical conditions affecting the Mag'wekwana overflow from which we had just emerged, and endeavour to arrive at a reasonable conclusion relative to the origin of this interesting and probably unique problem in nature.

From its connection with the great lake-like expanse into which the Kwando waters widen, as described at the commencement of the chapter, the bed of the Mag'wekwana is well defined for about sixty miles westward. Here it seems to give place to a number of subsidiary watercourses, expanding in number and inundating an increasing area of country as the Okavango valley is neared. During the flood these gradually widen until the surrounding space becomes one huge shallow lake, broken here and there by wooded islands, a few of considerable area, but the vast majority covering only a few acres. Reference to the map will show that the mean direction of the Mag'wekwana is identical with that of the Lower Kwando, and that the angle formed by the Okavango and Mag'wekwana is more obtuse than that created by the bend of the Kwando where it commences its northwesterly course. In fact, the assumption that the Okavango system once entered the Zambezi through the Kwando is not discounted by the relative direction taken by the Okavango and its tributaries to those of the Zambezi system. I do not pretend that this circumstance proves anything; it merely indicates that there is nothing unnatural in the assumption — if supported by more substantial evidence — that the Mag'wekwana at one time was part of the main bed of the Okavango, and that that river was originally purely and simply an affluent of the Kwando, or, we might say, of the Zambezi; for in

such a hypothesis the latter river would be reduced to the position of a tributary of the former.

The courses of rivers which rise and fall in such extremes as do those of Africa, are frequently very materially influenced by what at first sight appears but an insignificant obstruction. A tree is carried down by the flood and grounds in a shallow as the waters subside. During the ensuing dry season it becomes firmly embedded, owing to the action of the current on the shifting sand. Thenceforward it collects drift and floating *débris*, the sand continues to accumulate, and an island is formed. Every stage of this process can be seen over and over again in the Zambezi. I know of one instance where such an obstruction formed an island which grew rapidly into so formidable a bar that the whole course of the river was diverted from its original bed and a new one formed. Now the Okavango, for many miles above and below the Mag'wekwana outflow, passes through a flat country and has but an insignificant fall. For a moment let us imagine this river in bygone ages flowing down what is now known as the Mag'wekwana into the Kwando. An obstruction occurs which in the course of years takes the form of a bar extending some way across the bed. This has the effect of holding up the water above, and the surrounding country being dead flat and subject to annual inundations, a subsidiary water-course is cut. Such instances are not unknown, but as in the natural course of events the new stream finds its way into the main bed farther downstream, the change is but local, and the river otherwise remains unaltered. In the case of a river passing through a flat plain falling away gradually to the south as well as to the west, as it does in this instance, such a stream is almost as likely to diverge as to converge, and then it will depend on the soil's susceptibility to the action of water whether or not the new bed will expand at the expense of the old. If it does, the bar of sand and *débris* will gradually give place to a dam, and the whole course of the river will be diverted into the new channel.

The theory, then, which I venture to put forward is, that

in centuries long past, some such natural process has diverted the Okavango River from its original bed, the greater part of which remains intact to this day under the name of Mag'wekwana. Such a theory, so far from being opposed to probability, seems to me the natural solution of the problem. If the supposition be correct, the bed of the Mag'wekwana as it is to-day is precisely what would be expected. It is blocked and filled in for about one-third of the distance from the Okavango to the Kwando. The overflowing floods, deprived of their former weight and power, have been unable to keep the bed clear. The sluggish overflow has deposited drift and vegetable waste as it wormed its way slowly forward, and, being so sluggish, has laid the refuse thickest in its earlier course. Each year, after a short inundation of nine or ten weeks, the water has drained off, and the sub-vegetation has been supplied with a top dressing and moisture at a time when it most requires it — when three rainless months have parched the surrounding veldt. Thus each succeeding year has added a layer of foreign and growing vegetable matter — infinitesimal in thickness, but none the less real. The peat-moss of the Irish bog and the sudd of the Nile are merely more rapidly growing examples of a similar process.

To a less extent, no doubt, the remainder of the channel, subject to the same process, has become narrower and shallower, but even to-day it is large enough in places to accommodate the Okavango during the greater part of the year, and could scarcely have been formed by the eight weeks' flood which drains slowly down it, and which, if native report can be relied on, is only just deep enough to float a canoe.

On the occasion when, at the Royal Geographical Society, I first put forward this theory, Professor Gregory remarked in comment: —

"One point especially interested me. I was asked some years ago to explain the formation of the Victoria Falls, and the only explanation I could arrive at by a study of the maps had one weak point — it wanted more water than at present flows over the Falls. If the Upper Okavango had at one

time entered the Zambezi, it would have remedied that difficulty."

Here again, I submit, is strong circumstantial evidence in favour of the theory. Coming as it does from so eminent an authority as Professor Gregory, who has added practical research in Africa to the theoretical study of his subject at home, the logical conclusion at which he arrives is entitled to the fullest weight.

One other point in connection with this overflow merits some comment. Why should it not take place till the middle of April, at a time when the Zambezi floods, under very similar conditions of rainfall, are already subsiding, and have quite disappeared long before the former have drained off? The Okavango and its great tributary, the Kwito, have their sources but a short distance from those of the Lungwebungu and Kwando, and thus these western Zambezi affluents are subject to much the same climatic influence as their Okavango neighbours. I am given to understand that, although the distribution of wet and dry season is much the same in the eastern section of the Zambezi basin as in the west, the earlier rains are heavier in the latter than in the former district. Other conditions then being equal, the western floods should be earlier and not later than those in the east.

By the first week in June I had traced the Okavango to its confluence with the Kwito, and the latter river to the point where it is cut by the 15th parallel south, and this apparent inconsistency no longer puzzled me. First I had seen a great plain one hundred miles long and averaging ten miles in breadth, buried in two or three feet of water by the Okavango waters. To drain such an area of flat country is a matter of time. Above this for a further seventy or eighty miles the river is held up by a series of rocky bars as it winds through a steep, narrow bed. In following the Kwito for a further three hundred miles, I passed along the borders of another, but narrower plain, likewise inundated, and extending throughout the whole course of the river to where I left it, and for some indefinite distance beyond. Now the

mean fall in these five hundred miles of river, including as it does the series of rapids on the Okavango, is barely one foot in the mile. Water holds up water just as effectively as do rocks or other obstructions, and until the volume below is removed, the free flow of that above is arrested. Thus at the commencement of June the Kwito floods in 15° south latitude showed no signs of abatement. Over so slight a decline this great storage of millions of cubic feet of water continues to supply the Okavango plain for weeks, and, as this is "held up" under similar conditions below the Magwekwana outlet, the overflow continues to a later date than do the Zambezi floods, which are more readily drained away by the spacious bed of that great waterway.

Another interesting feature in connection with this flood lies in the fact that it reacts on the waters of the Kwando at a date when that river has lowered considerably. The retarded supply of water entering the Kwando "lake" swells its volume and raises its surface. Thus the free flow of the Kwando, which is a mere dribblet when compared in volume with the watery expanse through which it flows, is obstructed, and the stream is held up so that for some miles its water level is raised.

Mr. P. C. Reid, in an interesting paper read before the Royal Geographical Society, alluded to this rise in the Kwando, occurring as it does in the middle of the dry season, as an interesting exception to the general rule. He naturally surmised that this second and exceptional rise came from above and not from below. However, at the moment he witnessed it Captain Hamilton was three hundred miles farther up the course of the river, Captain Quicke was following its course about the same distance farther on, and I was camped between the two at the Kubangui-Kwando confluence. At none of these points did the river show any sign of increase; on the contrary, it had sunk to quite insignificant proportions in its upper waters.

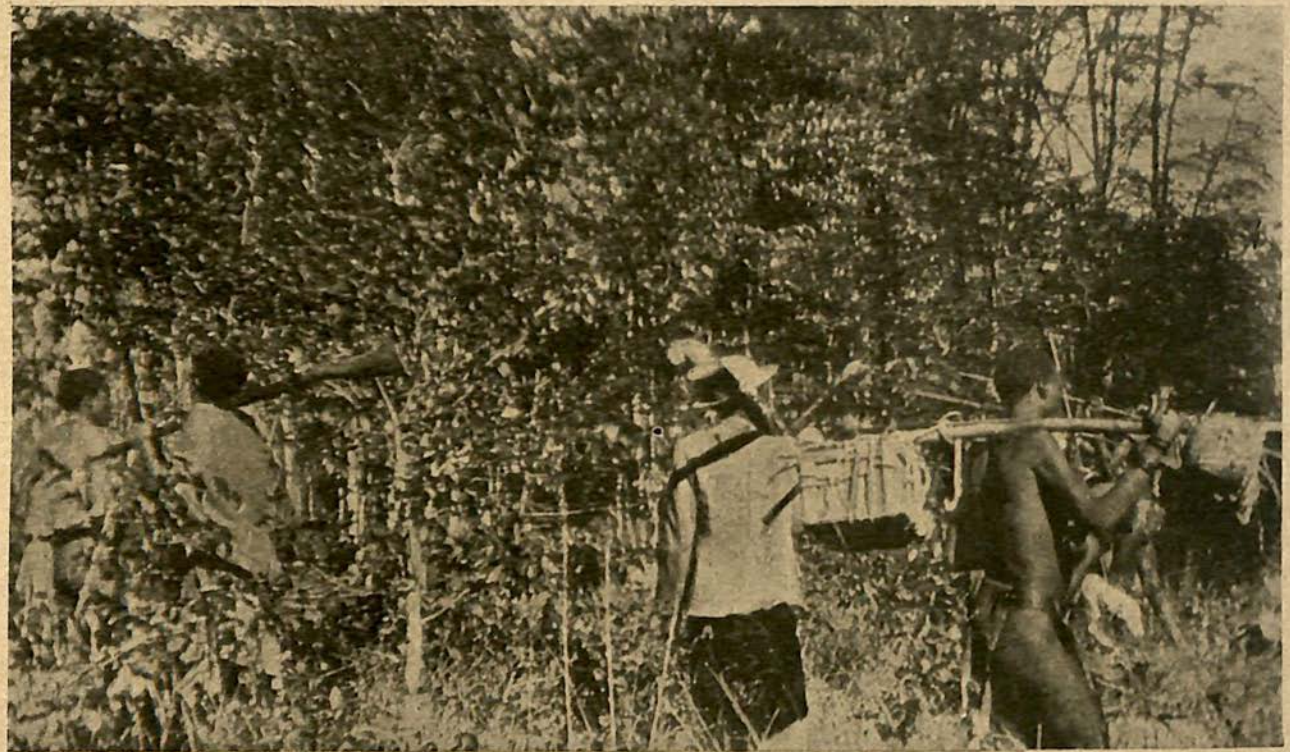
Five days before arriving at the ruined village of Bietcha two natives came into camp, and implored my aid in restoring

to them their wives and daughters, of whom they had been deprived under the following circumstances: —

A fellow-villager — Makumbe by name — had been absent on a journey, having left his wife at home. In his absence, one Niru of Sejala, an adjoining district, had won the lady's affection, and taken her to wife. It is not surprising that this incident should have bred ill-feeling between Makumbe and Niru. The former demanded the return of his wife, but his demand was treated with scorn by both man and woman. The people of Bietcha constituted themselves arbitrators in the case, and insisted that the wife, since she refused to return to her lawful husband, need not do so, but must leave her paramour also. This attempt at compromise did not find favour in the eyes of the erring ones, and Niru stoutly refused to give up the lady. On this the men of Bietcha adjourned to Sejala to insist on their demand. No doubt the personal interview led to much angry talk and threats of violence, but they none the less returned without satisfaction. A few nights later Niru, having collected an armed following from his own and two neighbouring villages, surprised Bietcha under cover of darkness. Makumbe was seized, his arm was broken, both feet were cut off, and he was afterward shot. His brother, while hastening to the rescue, was stabbed in the back and killed. On this the men of Bietcha fled, while Niru and his company appropriated their women and flocks. After hearing their pitiful tale, I told the refugees that I would do what I could for them, and directed them to follow the caravan. Within the village precincts they showed me a hole in the ground which had been the grave of Makumbe, but in their absence the body had been exhumed and carried away — probably thrown to the hyænas.

The next day we reached Mundungu, a neighbouring Mampukushu village. Here we found the stolen women and children, and I saw them handed over to their rightful lords; yet such is the African temperament, that neither man nor woman deemed it necessary to confer so much as a look of gratitude on the author of their reunion.

The district we now passed through borders on the Okavango River, and is inhabited by two distinct tribes — the Maiye, whose country extends southward down the river, and Mampukushu refugees who had fled their country in order to place distance between their chief Lebebe and themselves, as that sympathetic ruler had insisted on his right to the ownership of their children, whom he was in the habit of selling to the Mambare slave dealers from Portuguese territory in the west. The villages of the two tribes are intermixed throughout the district, but each people retains its own characteristics and customs. Though friendly, they seem to live quite apart, and do not intermarry. The Maiye, who are distinctly a South African tribe, are a lighter-skinned, smaller-boned though not a shorter race than their neighbours, and both sexes wear their hair short, as is the custom of all the South African tribes. The complexion of the Mampukushu is one shade from very black. They have broad foreheads, high cheek bones, and are above the average in height. The men cut their forehead hair short, but wear the remainder in greasy ringlets three or four inches in length, while their women affect a "coiffure" peculiar to themselves. The hair, allowed to grow long, is plaited into a pigtail behind. Into this they work bark thread, by the help of which the pigtail attains considerable length — long enough to be sat upon. A mere ornament by day, this crop of false hair becomes of practical value at night-time. It is coiled around the side of the head in such a way as to form a pillow whereon to rest the head. Equally apart is the character of the huts constructed by the one tribe and the other. The Mampukushu build a cone-shaped thatched hut which, like the usual home of the African, stands where it is constructed until deserted or burned. The Maiye cut a few thin flexible branches, which are bent over and fixed in the ground at either end. These are tied one to the other where they cross, and in two or three hours a half-spherical framework is fixed firmly in the ground. On this mats are tied, and the result is a neat little edifice more



Working a Passage Through the Okavango Thickets

weather-proof than a tent and almost as easily transferred to a new site. Occasionally an elongated shape with rounded points is adopted — a style which admits of considerable enlargement without necessitating a departure from their favourite method of construction.

Travelling through these parts at this time of the year could not be recommended to those in search of pleasure. Except in the immediate neighbourhood of villages, the footpaths run along the borders of the great flat plain through which the Okavango takes its circuitous course. Thus during the inundations the paths are under water, and as a consequence progress must be made through an entanglement of thorns and rank undergrowth or along the edge of the plain in a foot of water. Personally, I chose the latter as being the least of two evils. At first, everlasting wading from morning till night is apt to be tiring, but my experience in the Mag'wekwana swamps had endowed me with something of an amphibious nature.

The spoor of bushbuck and situtunga was daily encountered, but I saw neither in the body, owing mainly to the fact that vegetation was now at its height, but partly because, having to perform a long journey in limited time, I was not disposed to waste that time in looking for game. I had, however, no difficulty in filling the pot with guinea-fowl and duck, both of which were fairly plentiful. Locusts had been playing havoc here. It was sad to see well-grown cornstalks standing deprived of their grain when within a fortnight of harvesting time.

The soil is of a dark, yellow sandy character, and grows a profusion of rank vegetation and thorn-bush.

CHAPTER XIV

Wild game and Bushmen — An eccentric language — Habits of the Bushman — His diet and weapons — Scanty shelter — First step toward progress — The effect of the camera — A secluded village — Rising ground — Dense bush — Description of the Okavango plain — The MAMPUKUSHU country — First villages — The Okavango — A considerable river — Its course southwards — Its disappearance — The subsidence of Lake NGAMI — The POPA Rapids — Unreliable maps — Work for the explorer — A blind centenarian — His grievance against SEKOME — TEPANANA Island — LEBEBE'S messages — His rain-making powers — An hereditary craft — How Lebebe succeeded his uncle at the expense of his elder brother — Lewanika and Sekome — Their rival claims — The latter's "diplomacy" — On the verge of war — Lewanika dissuaded — Appeal to the British government — Visit to Lebebe — The usurper and his rascally entourage — A second visit — A messenger to LIALUI — An unexpected present — The Makwengari country — Origin of the Mampukushu — A short history

CHAPTER XIV

IN THE COUNTRY OF THE BUSHMEN

On the 22nd, by dint of hard marching, we had passed from the inhabited area to a wide district entirely given up to wild game and wandering Bushmen.

These strange people are, for Africans, very light in colour, many being but a shade darker than a well-bronzed European. Slim, wiry, and nimble, they are taller than their Kalahari brethren. In point of conversation they give the impression of being in the transition stage between the "click" and the throat method of giving expression to the workings of the mind. The click is the click of the little Bushman of the southern Kalahari, — the rest is but an imperfect imitation of the method obtaining among the higher races. The impression this language leaves on the ears of the listener is best illustrated by recalling to the mind the hollow, indistinct utterances emitted from a roofless mouth, and relieving the monotony of these incoherent sounds by a free intermixture of "clicks." Here is an interesting study for the philologist who has the means and leisure to study the language on the spot with the aid of an interpreter — and Lewanika would provide one. The habitat of this tribe extends from the Okavango through the thirst country in a northeasterly direction toward the Kwando River. Though differing both in appearance and language from the little Bushman of the southern Kalahari and his more northern cousin, the Masarwa, the Makwengo, as our friend of the Okavango is styled by the superior tribes, shares with his cousins those conditions of life which compel him to wander about the bush like the beast of the field, picking up a precarious livelihood from the

modest bounties of uncultivated nature. Like the beast, he ignores cover at night, sleeps wherever chance finds him when the sun goes down, and lives mainly on roots, snakes, berries, fungus, or other easily procured substance judged edible in the light of his eyes. It was amusing to note the greed with which my Bushman guides appropriated the bodies of one or two snakes I killed. Each Makwengo carries an axe, a short, barbless spear, and bow and arrows, with the help of which he occasionally adds clean meat to his larder.

Litsolo, who had made use of these wild men during his hunting excursions and spoke their language with apparent fluency, was able to give me much interesting information about this and other tribes.

"How do they protect themselves from the weather in the wet season?" I inquired.

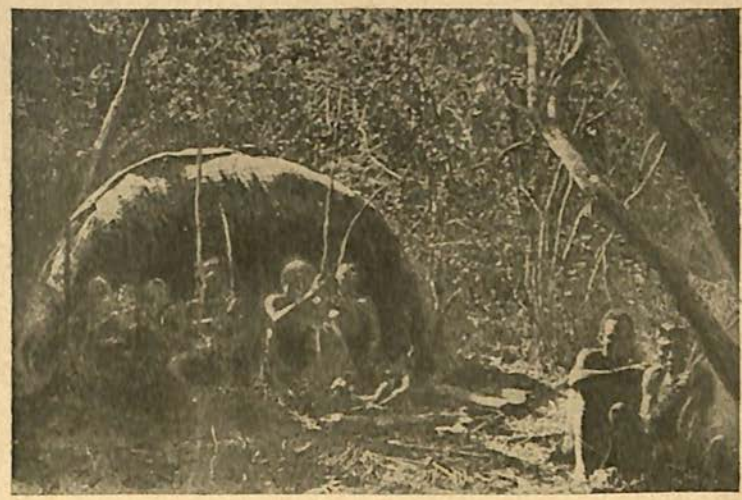
"They detach a piece of bark from a tree and place it over the head."

"But what about the rest of the body?"

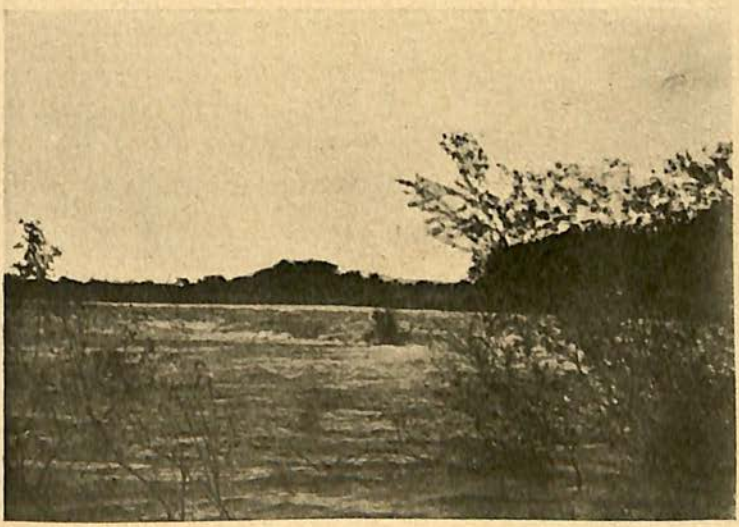
"Oh, they leave that to take care of itself."

However, a very small minority of these primitive people are commencing to show some signs of taking the first step up the ladder of civilisation. Two years prior to my passage through their country, that is to say in the summer of '96–'97, a small section of the tribe cleared the bush in obscure spots along the river where the forest is thickest, and here they have made gardens which produce small crops of mealies, sorghum, and pumpkins. They have gone still farther; for the small square piece of bark, which, in their previous life, made so discriminating a distinction between the head and the remainder of the body, has been discarded in favour of the hut, — the portable form adopted by their Maiye neighbours having found favour in their eyes.

My first introduction to a member of this aboriginal race — for I think it is admitted that the Bushman and "pygmies" of to-day are representatives of the oldest extant race once occupying the greater portion of the African continent — was instructive as exemplifying the inherent superstitious



The Bushmen of the Okavango



The Popa Rapids

timidity resulting from generations of persecution at the hands of the present lords of the soil.

We were following a native path, winding through thick bush, when suddenly we found ourselves face to face with a lithe, yellow man, who, judging from the surprise written on his countenance, had only just discovered our approach. At first he made as though he would beat a hasty retreat; but on Litsolo assuring him in his own language that he need have no fear, he advanced shyly and evidently not quite at his ease. A few questions were asked him about the road, and as he became more composed, I felt I might venture to photograph him. I carried a small binocular camera, the most useful camera for such purposes, owing to the rapidity with which the lens can be directed on the subject to be photographed. But it was not to be; for as I raised the camera to my eyes, a look of horror flashed over the wild man's features, both eyes and mouth opened to their full capacity, and in a moment he had disappeared in the surrounding bush. A second Bushman, who had joined his companion, treated us with more confidence, and led us by a winding path to his well-hidden village, and there we found what I have described above,—a small community of yellow men, women, and children dwelling in some half-dozen mat-made huts, and around them a few square yards of garden.

As we continued the journey, every day's march saw the undulations bordering the water-logged plain increase in height. In many places the thorn-bush was particularly dense and obstructive, and native paths had quite ceased to exist. Nevertheless, by lengthening the hours of march we were able to keep up our average rate of five hundred miles a month, which I calculated to be necessary if we were to reach the "rendezvous" camp on the Kubangui at the time appointed. It was now possible to select nightly camping sites thirty and forty feet above swamps and mosquitoes. The view over the plain was quite bright and pleasing. The high ground rising from the level of the plain is covered with trees, now in full leaf, as are also numerous mounds which

rise here and there above the broad, watery flats. In active contrast to the dark green foliage of the trees is the bright colouring of the long swamp-grass, stretching, as it does, for miles, to the faint blue undulations rising from the southern confines of the plain. Silvery streaks and patches where the water rises above the reach of the grass adds further lustre to the landscape. What a transformation the presence of a few trees effects in such a picture! The Burotse plain is just such another inundated flat at this time of the year, but there no tree relieves the eye, which rests on what appears to be an interminable swamp. As a consequence, there is no beauty in it, all is monotony,—dismal and uninteresting in the extreme.

On the 25th of April we camped near a cluster of villages over which a chief known as Lebebe presides. This man is not to be confused with the ruling chief of the Mampukushu tribe, to whom he owes allegiance. He was given the title of Lebebe by the late chief, Lebebe Andara, as a mark of special favour to an old friend and subject, and to the confusion of travellers like myself when passing through the district of the smaller man. When told that Lebebe did this, or Lebebe did that, it was always necessary to ascertain which Lebebe did this or that, if one would arrive at a less unreliable conclusion than one would under ordinary circumstances in this land of falsehood.

We had crossed the border of the Mampukushu country proper that afternoon, at the site of a village, long since deserted, named Nemakou, and had now reached the first villages under the Mampukushu chief's control. It was here that I first set eyes on the river in whose swampy borders I had done so much wading during the last ten days. The great plain ends here, and the Okavango in a deep, strong stream speeds past high banks two hundred feet apart. Judging from the width of the river at the Popa Rapids and the great rush of water I saw passing over that rocky bar, the depth of the river here must be considerable in flood time.

The fate which awaits this great river, draining as it does

an area extending many hundred miles to the northwest, is both interesting and instructive. By the time it reaches the nineteenth degree of south latitude it enters the Kalahari Desert, through which it takes a southerly course toward Lake Ngami. It does not progress far through this thirsty, sandy waste before its waters show a rapid decrease in volume, and the traveller who follows its course finds himself, in but a few short days, walking along the banks of a dry bed. At one time, no doubt, the Okavango served to swell Lake Ngami, which at the date of its discovery by Oswell and Livingstone was many miles across, but is now by comparison a mere puddle. One can quite understand the absorption of the little Molopo, on which the now historic town of Mafeking stands, or even of the Botletle, but that so large a river as the Okavango should be lost entirely by the simple process of soakage in so short a distance is probably without parallel in Africa or elsewhere. The inference is that water, which is not evaporated but merely drawn beneath the surface, still exists and could be tapped by means of artesian wells. The Kalahari is more correctly described as a wilderness than a desert in the popular acceptation of the word. It is well wooded, and in places grows some of the best pasture to be found in South Africa. It is placed beyond the margin of cultivation solely on account of the absence of surface water, but no doubt in the far future, when the surplus population of the federated states of South Africa are driven afield in search of pastures new, many will find a prosperous home in an irrigated productive Kalahari.

A twenty-mile march on the 26th brought us to extensive cornfields in the vicinity of the Popa Rapids. Estimated on the basis of the existing maps, we should have reached these rapids in a very much shorter mileage. For all the use these maps are to the traveller, it would have been very much better had the Okavango been entered in dotted lines or left out altogether, instead of in the definite twists and curls of which the river does not plead guilty, and which are allotted a position on the earth's surface through which its waters do

not flow. It is by no means rare to hear it stated that there is but little further use for the African explorer nowadays. I can assure my readers that the map of Africa will be subject to more additions, alterations, and modifications than even many of those interested in geography at home suppose, before it gives a truthful representation of the physical features of the continent. The river at Popa is four or five hundred yards wide. There is but a slight fall in ground, and although flood time is not the best to study a river from the point of view of its possible navigation, it seemed to me that a few charges of dynamite would enable light-draught steamers with fairly powerful engines to effect its passage.

The scenery of Popa cannot be said to be beautiful; the banks are low and the vegetation stunted, thorny, and uninteresting.

On the following evening we camped opposite a picturesque group of islands, one of which is the home of a very old Mampukushu chief called Monika. The old gentleman sent a canoe across with the expression of a hope that I would not pass on without visiting him, as he wished to ask a favour of me. On reaching the island, I entered a small village built in the Maiye style and was welcomed by this very aged, dried-up old man. He had lost the use of his eyes, but in other respects retained the possession of his faculties, and was able to move slowly about with the aid of sticks. In endeavouring to estimate his age I put the usual questions and elicited the fact that when Sebitwane first entered the country his daughter was already a mother. Now the date of Sebitwane's invasion is approximately '26. A grandfather in '26 could not well be younger than 105 in '99, even if each generation first propagated its species at the early age of sixteen.

The old man was full of grievances, the principal one being against Sekome, the Batawana chief. It appears that in '95, at the instance of white men living at Ngami, Sekome had organised a punitive expedition against the Makwengari chief Niangana, at whose village Mr. Weisel, a trader, was treacherously murdered. Niangana was made prisoner, his

village sacked and his people slain. After trial at Ngami he was released and allowed to return to his home. Sekome's army returned through Lebebe's country, appropriating the flocks and herds of the Mampukushu *en route*, and since then emissaries have been sent annually to claim tribute from Lebebe. Monika said that having been a chief all his life, he was now a slave, and what he wanted of me was that I should ask the English government to insist on Sekome minding his own business. Late in the afternoon we camped within a thousand yards of Tepanana Island, which has been the site of the Mampukushu capital for three-quarters of a century.

Early in the morning Lebebe's head man conveyed his master's greetings to me, coupled with his regrets that he was engaged that day with a deputation of Marotse chiefs, who were visiting him *en route* to Sekome, at Lake Ngami, but that he would pay his respects to me early next day. In returning the compliment, I informed him that as my visit to him must necessarily be short, I expected him to find time to visit me that afternoon. In reply to this came a present of a cheetah skin, which had apparently done many years' duty since its former owner fell into human hands. "Lebebe," said his henchman, "is afraid to go so far from his island, and hopes the white man will move his camp down to the river." I did not move the camp, and Lebebe did not visit me that afternoon. The night, fortunately, gave me a good opportunity for latitudinal observations, but scarcely had I completed operations, when the sky clouded and a violent thunder-storm passed overhead. In '99 the rains were abnormally late throughout the whole of the western half of the Upper Zambezi basin and contiguous districts. April was now almost past, and yet storms continued to sweep the country every few days. Now for many years past, Lebebe and his predecessors have possessed a widespread fame as successful "rain doctors," and their "medicines" are treated quite seriously by the surrounding tribes. The Makololo chiefs, Sebitwane and Sekeletu, juggled with them, and both Sepopa and Lewanika, their Marotse successors, were in the

habit of remitting part of the annual tribute in favour of a few handfuls of the hereditary rain doctor's rubbishy concoctions. It is scarcely to be credited that the Lebebes have believed in the efficacy of their "medicines," but the security they have derived from pandering to the superstitious instincts of their own and neighbouring tribes is considerable. However, the subtle impostor, who to-day fears to leave his island home, does not enjoy among his own subjects a security in any way commensurate with his widespread reputation abroad.

Lebebe Andara, the late chief, died at the close of '95. Uncharitable folk hint that medicaments of a more potent nature than those used for the production of rain were administered to the old man by his dutiful nephew. Be that as it may, Andara died at a convenient moment, and the son of his sister seized the sacred "makek" and all accessories, the possession of which furnishes the main right to the chieftainship. Monkoya, a senior nephew, a son of the same sister by a different "brother-in-law," and the accepted heir, finding himself ousted, went into hiding, but, returning surreptitiously later, obtained possession of the mystic crucible by a successful ruse, and decamped. Of course Lebebe insisted that his half-brother had purloined the wrong pot, and as a result he retained an impaired influence. As a direct consequence of this incident, the tribe is divided into two parties, and both usurper and pretender are supported by professing and secret partisans. The former, with all the suspicious nervousness of a treacherous character, never quits the security of his island home, where he is surrounded by a few trusty followers.

But this quarrel has wider interest than that of the insignificant little state more immediately affected. The Mampukushu, as will be seen by the short reference to their history given below, spring from a central Marotse province, and from time immemorial have been subject to the ruler of this colossal black empire. Monkoya naturally appealed to his suzerain, Lewanika, and received his support. Unfor-

tunately for him, another claimant to the sovereignty of the tribe has recently appeared on the scene, and Lebebe naturally sought and obtained the rival patronage.

In '85, Moreme, Sekome's predecessor as chief of the Batawana, led an army into Marotseland to befriend Lewanika and restore him to the power from which he had been driven by his disaffected subjects. But Lewanika had already retrieved his fortunes, so after being hospitably and honourably entertained by the man he had come so far to succour, Moreme returned whence he came, tarrying awhile with Lebebe Andara *en route*. With Andara Moreme made an arrangement whereby the emigrant Mampukushu, who had preferred exile to the bartering of their offspring by their chief, and who had settled among his subjects, the Maiye, should be acknowledged as his people, and the place Nemakou was agreed on as the tribal boundary on the river. Since the passage of his army through Bumpukushu in '95, Sekome has set up a claim to the country, and to Lewanika he bluntly announced his claim thus:—

"You have the Mashikolumbwe, the Mankoya, and the Matoka; they are quite enough for you; I must have the Mampukushu. If you will not give them, I will go myself and take them."

To Lebebe, who, in protesting against the claim, cited his predecessor's treaty with Moreme, came the somewhat arbitrary reply:—

"Moreme is dead and Andara is dead; their treaty is dead also."

Lewanika was prepared to fight the question out, but ultimately on representations made to him by Monsieur A. Jalla, the Lialui missionary, who was anxious to save bloodshed, he held his hand and appealed to the British government. In the meantime the artful Lebebe successfully plays off the one against the other, pays tribute to both, and remains on his island in apparent security.

The next morning camp was moved to high ground about a mile above Tepanana Island. Being assured that fear to

leave his island alone prevented Lebebe from paying his promised visit, and moreover having more important reasons for interviewing this young man than mere curiosity, I took the initiative and bearded the impostor in his den.

About thirty-five years of age, prepossessing in appearance, of quiet demeanour and good address, Lebebe is vastly superior to the rascally crew that surrounds him. At the outset he endeavoured to impress me with his importance, by passing his remarks through the medium of four of his retainers. This was a lengthy process, and not quite to my liking, so I insisted on Jack interpreting the conversation direct.

"I understand you can make rain," I commenced.

"Yes, that is so."

"You say you are pleased to see me. Why then have you made so much rain while I was on the road? Your rain has made travelling most unpleasant. I consider you have acted in a most unfriendly manner."

"I am sorry you have been so inconvenienced. Unfortunately I did not know you were on the road, or I would have made other arrangements."

This little dialogue so touched my sense of humour that I could not but yield to an inclination to indulge in a good laugh, in which Jack and Litsolo joined.

"Do you think I am a child, that I should believe in your rain-making?" I asked. "I do not believe in it any more than you do yourself."

When the chief realised that I was amusing myself at his expense, his face relaxed into just such a smile as does that of a child in like circumstances. After further talk I gave him a suitable present, and he promised to send me a milch goat the next day. Early the following morning, in accordance with arrangements made on the preceding afternoon, I once more repaired to the island.

At the termination of the interview, I said to Lebebe, "Now remember, Lebebe, I want no more of your thunderstorms."

"No; there shall be no more," he answered, "and perhaps you will give me a little powder."

Being strongly averse to supplying natives with powder, if for no other reason than for the sake of the game, and being almost certain that Lebebe was promising what he did not possess, when he generously mentioned his intention of giving me a milch goat, I told him I carried powder only for my own use, but that when he sent me the promised goat, I would see if I could find a little powder for him.

Before starting I despatched Sefunangambe on a journey to Lialui with my home mail and a letter to Lewanika, giving him instructions to rejoin us at the Kubangui-Kwando confluence with any letters that might have arrived for us.

Shortly after striking camp we passed through a village called Sarimba, where, to my intense astonishment, the head man laid baskets of corn in front of me, which he said he had been instructed to present in his master's name. I sent back my thanks and a second present of cloth, which may, or may not, have reached the hands of the great rain-maker.

Two days later we passed through Mahapu, an extensive cluster of villages marking the boundary between the Mampukushu and the Makwengari tribes. So far as can be gathered from the limited sources at the disposal of history mongers, the following may be accepted as a substantially correct sketch of the history of the Mampukushu tribe.

These people originally dwelt on the banks of the Zambezi, in the neighbourhood of Kalima Molilo Rapids. In the reign of Mwanaserunda, from whom Lewanika is the thirteenth in succession, circumstances arose which led to the removal of the tribe from their original home. A rough calculation would place this date at about 1750. At that time Mwanabinye, the king's brother, was governor of the southern province, and in fact occupied the same position as Lewanika's son, Letia, holds to-day. A quarrel seems to have arisen between the Mampukushu and Leshwane, son of Lipelengi, whose village stood on the site of the present town of Kazungula. Blood having been spilt, Mwanabinye

deemed it advisable to widen the space between the quarrelsome chiefs, and the Mampukushu were removed to Mashe — the name by which the mid-Kwando swamps are known. Here they seem to have dwelt for about sixty years, when, in the early years of the nineteenth century, a large section of the tribe under their chief, Mashamba, "followed the elephants" to the Okavango, where they have remained till to-day. Mashamba established his capital on Tepanana Island, which has been the tribal headquarters ever since. The descendants of those who did not take part in this second migratory move are yet to be found in Mashe, where the ladies still keep up the custom of wearing plaits of artificial hair down their backs. For a few years subsequent to the Marotse collapse, the Mampukushu were virtually independent; but when Sebitwane, the Makololo conqueror, had established a firm grip on his new dominions, he extended his suzerainty to them. On the return to power of the Marotse dynasty, the old relations were established between Sepopa and the Mampukushu, and these were continued until in '95 the unsupportable claims of Sekome created the present deplorable situation.

While settled in Mashe, two chiefs and a chieftainess ruled the tribe — (1) Sinyunga, (2) Matiko, and (3) Mahuka. Matiko was the mother and Mahuka the father of the Mashamba who led the bulk of the tribe to the Okavango. Kanyumbe succeeded him, and he was followed by Lebebe. This was the man who first established for himself a reputation as a great rain-maker, and when he departed this life left to his heirs and successors his "medicines" and his reputation. Since his day his name has become the title of the ruling chief. The "great" man was succeeded in turn by Lebebe N'dimbu, Lebebe Andara, and finally by the present chief.

CHAPTER XV

The much-dreaded Makwengari — Not so terrible as painted — Niangana's message — His early kindness to Lewanika in exile — On the KWITO — A sudden change in soil and vegetation — Dissensions among the chiefs — Promotion and degradation — An evacuated district — A day's sport — On the spoor of buffalo — A stern chase — The penalty of curiosity — A fine head — Two days' hard marching — The first Mambunda village — Flight of the villagers — KATIBA — His grievance — Continuous oppression — Silima — The same story — An alliance of the weak — A striking contrast — Luombomba again — A late start — High altitude — The river of the country — BAMBE and his plight — A scheme for delay — A painful accident — Luombomba's ignorance and perversity — The result — Tramp, tramp, tramp — Luombomba delays blankets — Scanty garments and a cold night — The balance of equanimity — A salutary lesson — An African courtesy — The game of trust

CHAPTER XV

AMONG THE MAKWENGARI AND MAMBUNDA

We were now among the much-dreaded Makwengari. As I had anticipated, they were probably just as much afraid of us as even Luombomba was of them. In type they are not unlike Lebebe's Mampukushu, though possibly they are a little less unprepossessing than the scoundrels who surround the rain-making impostor. They seemed to regard our passage through their country with sullen apathy. No doubt the lesson Sekome and his Batawana had administered was still fresh in their minds. Niangana, whose journey to Lake Ngami and back may have had a salutary effect on his disposition, sent me a message, but the bearer did not catch me up till I was half a day's march past his town; this, being situated on the opposite bank of the Kwito near its confluence with the Okavango, had been passed unwittingly. He expressed his disappointment at not having had an opportunity of talking with me, and begged me to allow some of my chiefs to interview him, as he wished to send a message by them to Lewanika. When in '84 the Marotse king was in exile, Niangana had befriended him and received him with praiseworthy hospitality. So popular did the fugitive chief become among his host's subjects, that the suspicious susceptibilities of the latter led him to imagine himself deposed in favour of his distinguished guest. Rightly or wrongly, Lebebe Andara foresaw danger to the life of his exiled sovereign, and begged him to leave Niangana and take up his residence on the island of Tepanana. Lewanika has not forgotten this kindness he received at Niangana's hands, and is always ready to acknowledge it.

I had now passed the Kwito-Okavango confluence. In the eastern angle formed by the two rivers, the country is flat, the soil poor in quality, and the bush stunted, but on the opposite side of the river it rises in tree-clad undulations. The yellow soil of the Okavango is replaced by a white, sandy soil similar to that prevailing throughout almost the entire Upper Zambezi basin. With the sudden change in soil an equally sudden change in the character of the vegetation is manifest. The thorny acacia, with its small leaf, and the coarse, entangled undergrowth disappear in favour of foliage more varied, shade-giving, and bright, while the surface of the ground is almost entirely free from under-scrub.

At this stage discussion broke out among my followers. Luombomba had proved himself exceptionally active with his tongue, but absolutely unreliable and indolent. If ever he exerted himself at all, it was for the purpose of delaying our progress or in the endeavour to persuade his fellows that an early return to Lialui was advisable. Litsolo, on the other hand, was an active and intelligent fellow, who spoke the various languages current in the districts through which we passed. If I gave an order to the former, the sole result would be a long and eloquent harangue pointing out the advantages of making camp and resting for a day or two, or suggesting some course equally irrelevant and absurd; but the latter would set to work at once and carry out his instructions with intelligence. As would be expected, I had come to recognise Litsolo as my right-hand man, my sergeant major so to speak. I did everything through him and nothing through Luombomba, who remained my head chief in name only. Luombomba, it appeared, felt his insignificance, and nursed ill-will toward his favoured colleague. A battle royal — in words — was, as I afterward learned, the reason why I was allowed to march from camp one day unaccompanied by either chief. Expecting Litsolo to overtake me, I marched on, but not until midday did I have an opportunity of inquiring into this matter of apparent disrespect. On administering a sharp reprimand to Litsolo, he pleaded, "Luombomba com-

plains that the master always consults me, whereas he is the head chief appointed by Lewanika. He says that everything must come through him in future."

In a few minutes I formally relegated Luombomba to a second place, and gave him plainly to understand that whereas I could always rely on Litsolo carrying out my orders and being the help a head man should be to his master, he, on the other hand, had seemed to consider only how far he could put obstruction in my way.

"In future," I added, "Litsolo shall act as my head chief, and if you displease me further, you will go straight back to Lewanika with a letter explaining how useless you are."

After this, things went smoothly for some time. Litsolo was pleased with himself; Luombomba was subdued.

On the 5th of May we passed the last Makwengari village, and entered a broad strip of uninhabited country which had been evacuated by the Mambunda in their gradual recession before the advance of the depredating Makwengari. Here there was a little game, and the people we had left behind told us we might find buffalo one day's march ahead. This proved to be correct, for late the following evening we crossed the fresh spoor of a small herd.

I had not treated myself to a single day's sport since we entered Africa ten months previously, for the mere shooting of an animal encountered on the march is but a parody on sport. At the moment I felt more of the hunter and less of the explorer, as the near presence of buffalo recalled to memory some of the most interesting episodes of the chase which have fallen within my experience. Since the cruel desolating influence of the rinderpest has all but exterminated this sporting beast, it is no longer possible to meet herds in their hundreds, to see the forest around you black with the gamest of African game as you crawl about in search of the best head in the herd; but the chase of a single buffalo is a worthy sport, for the hunter meets an animal which can strike back and strike with effect. I had a good excuse for a day's delay, and I meant to take it. The boys had carried

their loads over a hundred miles in five days. So far the rank and file of the caravan had given no trouble and worked well, and I begrudged them neither rest nor a good feast off flesh. A shady spot near the river was selected as a camping ground, and preparations were made for an early rise. In the cool of the morning I moved out of camp with Litsolo and three picked boys, and leaving the river went straight inland. It was a typical buffalo country, — thick bush, with occasional open patches of good pasture, — and ere long we struck the spoor of a small herd as we traversed one of the small open spaces. The tracks, which were not an hour old, led us into dense bush, through which we wound in single file, Litsolo taking the spoor in front, while I followed close behind, keeping my eyes open in search of any movement ahead. A mile brought us to fresh dung, — still warm, — and this, coupled with the slow pace of the herd, as indicated by the spoor, told us the game must be no great distance in front. Avoiding dry sticks, and leaving the three boys to follow at a distance, Litsolo and I moved stealthily forward in a crouching position, until a snorting grunt coming from thick bush fifty yards away, arrested our progress for the moment. After a short breathing space we crawled slowly forward on hands and knees, until the sudden cracking of branches and the heavy thud of hammering hoofs told us the chase had entered on another phase. The herd was bearing to the right, and fortunately in that direction was a long narrow glade, bordering on the dense forest from which sound alone indicated their whereabouts. Putting my best leg forward, I ran all I knew down the open space, in the hope of cutting off the retreating herd, and soon found I was making headway. After four hundred yards of this, seven buffaloes careered into the open not more than seventy yards to my left front. The seven great hind quarters presented large but not very vulnerable targets, so I held on my course a little longer, until the chance I hoped for should be given. Another hundred yards and a great bull with a fine head, which brought up the rear, slackened his pace and turning half toward me stood

with his shoulder fully exposed. I took the chance he gave me, and the stricken animal followed in the wake of his companions with a heavy, ponderous gait. I knew he was mine, so waited for the boys before taking the spoor. Finding myself alone, I returned to the spot where I had left the tracks, and there found Litsolo vainly endeavouring to get on my spoor.

"Why did you not follow me? Do you expect me to follow the buffaloes alone?" I asked angrily.

"When the master went away we lost him in the brush and have been trying to find him ever since," was the reply.

"And you who could not keep me in sight call yourself a hunter. Why make yourself appear like an old woman?" And he looked ashamed of himself, as I intended he should do.

Half a mile along the blood spoor the bull lay dead across his own tracks. The bullet had entered the left shoulder, passed through the lungs, and out at the base of the neck. His head was the best I had ever secured, the horns being well shaped, with an extreme width of forty-two inches, which for the Central African specimen is well above the average.

The afternoon was spent in preparing the skull and scalp for transport, and, so far as the boys were concerned, in eating and talking, and this went on till the small hours of the morning, by which time there was not much meat to be carried away.

The next two days accounted for forty-five miles, bringing us within sight of the fires of the first Mambunda village. For the first time since encountering the Mag'wekwana inundations three hundred miles back, travelling had been rendered easy by the absence of both swamp and thick bush.

Early the ensuing morning we entered Marunga, the Mambunda village. The inhabitants, cowed by the frequent incursions of their Makwengari neighbours, apparently credited us with evil intentions, every one of them having abandoned their village for the bush. It was impossible to restore confidence, as there was no one left behind with whom to treat, so after serving out rations for three days to each boy from a store we discovered, I left a present for the

owner to show the unhappy people that an Englishman pays for what he takes. On the morrow we entered the village of Katiba. Mwenekatiba[1] visited us and poured forth his troubles. Niangana had deprived him of the whole of his country from the Okavango to Marunga. Not content with that, his people made periodical raids, usually at harvest time, when they carried off everything they could, killing the men and selling the women and children to the west coast slave traders. Would I tell Lewanika how bad things were with him and his people, and ask him to send a messenger to Niangana, ordering him to keep out of his country? I assured him that I was very sorry for him, and would certainly bring his case to Lewanika's knowledge, on my return to Lialui. Declining the old gentleman's pressing invitation to spend the night at his village, I continued the journey shortly after midday.

That evening I learned from local natives that the Kwito makes a considerable curve westward, and that by travelling due north I would save several days' march and strike its course above the bend. This suggestion suited my plans, as it would enable me to examine the country lying back from the river. Next day we did a long, waterless march of twenty miles, going right through without a halt till we reached the village of Silima. Mwenesilima described himself as the son of Mwenekatiba's mother by another father. He brought with him a large following, and, after preliminary greetings, sat himself on a stool supported on either side by his people, who squatted on the ground in a semicircular formation. Amongst this crowd were several Bushmen, with whom the Mambunda seem to have allied themselves, probably finding the keen natural instincts of these yellow men a protection against sudden surprise at the hands of their persecutors. The two tribes are in marked contrast. The Mambunda are a large-boned, thick-set people, with black skin and rounded features, and not unprepossessing. Their hair is worn in long, well-greased ringlets, and is frequently decorated with

[1] The affix MWENE signifies chieftainship.



Mambunda Woman and Bushman of the Kwito River

large white, blue, or red beads. The Bushman of these parts is a lithe, small-boned man, with a wrinkled, yellow skin, small black eyes, and narrow lips which, in some cases, even recede.

Mwenesilima, like his half-brother, poured forth a tale of woe. A few years ago his village was situated near the Okavango-Kwito confluence, but he had continually been compelled to fall back before his enemies. He had sent to Lewanika, telling him of his troubles, but as yet no succour had been vouchsafed him. "Even now," he added, "the Namarwa [a Makwengari tribe] are living on the gardens of my neighbour Chifaku, who has fled to the Kwando."

If I would only ask Lewanika either to drive away the Makwengari or give him land nearer to Burotse, so that he and his people might settle there, he would, he said, clap his hands and thank me all his life. After assuring him that I would do what I could for him, he returned to his village, promising to send a man at early dawn to point out the road. Of course, when the hour came no man arrived, so I sent a messenger to hasten matters, but without result. Next I sent Lefatse, one of my younger head men, but nothing came of that either — not even the return of the messenger. At length my patience was exhausted, so, calling Jack, I repaired with him to the village, which was about a mile from camp. There I found Luombomba talking with his usual fluency. Silima was there, too, so was Lefatse, as well as one or two others of my people. I was wroth, the flow of oratory ceased, and the orator with his audience beat a hasty retreat. Old Silima received a good rating, and professed penitence.

"How," I asked, "can you expect me to help you who treat me in this manner?" After this the guides were soon forthcoming, and we marched twenty-one miles through a rapidly rising country. Next day we reached an altitude of about four thousand feet above the sea level, and were on the ridge of country which forms the watershed between the Kwito and Kwando rivers. Each of these rivers receives its main supply through its right bank. Travelling, as I did,

along a route with the Kwito barely twenty-five miles to the west, I crossed several tributaries of the Kwando, which flow about two hundred miles to the east.

To describe one of these streams is to describe all. The falling away of the ground is so slight as to make it difficult at times to determine in which direction the water flows. As a consequence, the bed is wide and shallow. This, again, is fringed by two or three hundred yards of good pasture grass, more or less in a state of swamp. Beyond, the ground rises gradually in a series of undulations, covered with trees which seem to prosper in the white sandy soil from which they spring. After passing nine of these in the course of two and a half days, we reached a large, oval-shaped pan, over a mile in length, called by the natives Bezi-bezi. Out of this flows a river, on the right bank of which we found a small village. Here, seated on wooden stools, were three sulky-looking rascals clad in dirty European clothes. At first I took them to be native traders from the west coast, but a few questions proved one of them to be Bambe, the head man of the village, and a son of Silima. He had fled hither to escape the Makwengari. The other two alleged themselves to be fugitive head men, whose villages had been destroyed, and whose people had been killed or captured. To appear sulky under such conditions is perhaps natural. As usual, on reaching a village, my people wanted to camp, in spite of the fact that the day was yet young and only eleven miles had been travelled. Of course I was unwilling to entertain the suggestion, and of course Luombomba and his company endeavoured to gain their end by intrigue. With a view to acquiring geographical intelligence, it was my custom to engage, when available, a couple of local boys to accompany the caravan through their own district, and Bambe in this instance undertook to supply two such guides. These not being forthcoming after more than a reasonable delay, I suspected I knew the cause of their absence, and sent for Luombomba and Litsolo, whom I taxed with instigating Bambe to keep the boys back. Yes, they were guilty, but

feared to ask me to camp a second time, lest I should be angry; and the porters were very tired and wanted rest. They feigned great penitence, but if I could only remain here for the rest of the day, they would march as hard as I wished on the morrow. Always the present, and let the future look after itself! — a complaint which perhaps is not peculiar to black men. I humoured them this time, and in order that they should not complain of being relieved of their side of the bargain, took them forty-three miles the next two days. This brought us to a large open plain. In a weak moment I had on the second day given Jack and Litsolo leave to remain behind to try and secure meat at the expense of a small herd of lechwe which had been sighted in the distance. Surmising, no doubt, that if they failed to appear during the midday halt, I would wait for them, they stayed behind; but in this they were disappointed, for I had no intention of allowing success to their scheme.

Before continuing the journey I was the victim of a mishap which caused me much annoyance and pain for three weeks. After returning from my midday ablutions in a stream hard by, with unsocked feet in unlaced boots, I ordered my Zulu boy Machin to bring me a stick from the fire, wherewith to light my pipe. To my discomfiture a burning ember fell into what the Irishman calls the "boot mouth," and settled below the ankle bone. Quickly as the boot was removed, it remained long enough to enable the cinder to inflict a very nasty burn. For two days there was a large-sized blister only, but when once this burst and left behind it an open wound, which was constantly being contaminated in wading through morasses, an angry and painful sore resulted, and things went from bad to worse. The journey had proved so much more lengthy than anticipated, that though we seldom did less than twenty miles in a day, we bade fair to keep the other two caravans waiting at the Kubangui, so that I did not feel justified in giving my foot the few days' rest it required; and in consequence I spent a very unhappy half-hour each morning until that member warmed to its work.

As would be expected, Luombomba made an effort to delay the afternoon march, and later — more through ignorance than conscious perversity — tried to lead me off in the wrong direction. Stopping short on seeing that I preferred to go the way I thought fit, he commenced to talk with his habitual fluency, and urged that a southeasterly course was the direction we should follow, although our aim and object lay in the north. Losing all patience with this fool of a man, I left him pouring forth a string of sentences. The comical side of the incident struck me with full force when, on looking back after walking three hundred yards, I saw the man still holding forth for all he was worth, in spite of the fact that he had not a soul to listen to him. Later, when the porters came up, he had the impudence to lead them off in the direction of his fancy, leaving me with my small personal escort, and without food or blanket. Litsolo being out of the way, he evidently intended to have his innings, but his little escapade added miles to his day's march; for although he had the gratification of exploiting his own route, he had ultimately to take mine in addition, and did not join me until the last rays of light were disappearing. During the night Luombomba seems to have persuaded the whole caravan that we were on the wrong track. Immediately to the north lay an extensive open plain, largely under water, in which more than one tributary river finds its source. With the advantage of travelling dry, I so far compromised matters as to commence the day's march in an easterly direction. After travelling six miles, I halted by a small river, in order to give Litsolo time to come up, for he was admitted by all to be a "man of the veldt," and his fellows had implicit faith in his knowledge of the country. After waiting a considerable time for the porters, and in their absence being unable to prepare my midday meal, I sent Lefatse back with orders to track and bring in the missing boys; but it was not until evening that the caravan was collected, and with them came Litsolo and Jack, who had struck their spoor and traced them. After cross-examining some of the porters, I learned that Luom-

bomba's pig-headedness had yet again caused the trouble. I confess it was with great difficulty that I confined myself to words during the short interview which ensued. However, as may be expected, I spoke to him very straightly, and then contemptuously ordered him out of my sight. Litsolo, no doubt pleased to have an indirect hit at his rival, told his fellows that the white man alone of all of them knew how to find his way through the country, and ridiculed them for so persistently trying to lose both themselves and their master.

For some days everything went smoothly. The conditions of travel remained much the same as heretofore, — tramp, tramp, tramp, from morning till night over forest-clad undulations and through morass-bound streams at intervals; days bright and warm, nights clear and cold — in fact ice was at times to be found in the early morning. Occasionally the boys played the usual little monkey tricks, in which the subtle hand of Luombomba was generally to be traced, but on the whole they marched well and gave but little trouble.

On one occasion, however, these tricks were carried rather too far. Luombomba had, I was told, stayed behind to "talk" with the people of a village near which we had camped the previous night. This did not trouble me — in fact, nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to learn that he had permanently taken up his residence in the background. However, it transpired that he had delayed most of the boys, and, as a consequence, Jonas — an ill-visaged person, with large, watery, fishlike eyes and an abnormal mouth, even for a member of the race to which he belonged — did not put in an appearance with my blankets until 7.30 the following morning. It is unnecessary to describe that night. Suffice it to say that all the covering I had was a thin cotton shirt, a pair of flannels cut short above the knees, and boots and socks, and that the thermometer registered 6.5° above freezing-point at sunrise. Now, in such circumstances, it is to be doubted whether even an archbishop would be in a very amiable mood as in the early morning before breakfast he watched his blankets slowly approaching above the ogre-

like head of a Jonas. Certainly I was in no mood to be trifled with. The boy's sole excuse was that "it was too cold." My telling him that he deserved a sound thrashing, and would get it if he was not very careful, seemed to amuse him rather than otherwise, but his features were rapidly transformed, as in rapid succession he received three of the best on his already broad nose. That feature widened appreciably and bled profusely, the moist, bleary eyes became moister, and the mouth expanded still wider, as it gave vent to a series of screeching sobs. On the whole I imagine Jonas had learned his lesson.

In different countries there are various ways of greeting strangers, and savage Africa is not without its little courtesies. As we approached a village the bulk of the inhabitants, as was frequently the case, fled, but returned when Litsolo shouted to them that the white man was an Englishman and wished them no ill. As I drew near, the village head man thrice raised his hands above his head and shouted his salutes. Then followed a little ceremony which I had never before seen. Disappearing within his hut for a moment, he handed me a tube containing powder, with some little remark of which I could only conjecture the purport. At first I naturally thought that this was the customary gift, to refuse which would be an insult, and when about to tell Jack to make a return present, Litsolo intervened to tell me that I must give back the powder to the head man. It then transpired that an interpretation of the action into words would run somehow thus — "I place myself and all I have unreservedly in your hands, being confident in your friendship and integrity." The property is then returned as an earnest that what is his is respected as such.

CHAPTER XVI

In the valley of the LOMBA — A stockaded village — The slave trade of the interior — Its baneful influence — Wanted a Wilberforce — Europe's neglect of duty — The extermination of the labour supply — The bright side of domestic slavery — The dark side of the supply system — The cloak of free labour — A disunited tribe — MWENECHACHINGE'S tale — An unsuccessful sportsman — The wise man in the north — The prescription — Its failure and results — An excuse for a slave raid — Appeal for protection — Diplomatic obstruction — VALOVALE immigrants and the Mambunda — Their characteristics — The KWITO again — A large river — Its possibilities — A "black Portuguese" — A rubber country — A modest plant — The extraction of the rubber — An African yew tree — Valovale graves — The African's lack of sentiment — His respect for the dead and how he shows it — A comparison — Crossing the rivers of the west — An unstable craft — A swim in the KWEMBO

CHAPTER XVI

AFRICAN SLAVERY

On the 24th of May the path led us down a long, steep decline into the valley of the Lomba, a Kwando affluent. In the midst of this flat, alluvial space there stands the village of Chachinge enclosed within a ring of earthworks surmounted by a high palisade. Chachinge had quite recently been the scene of one of those tragic episodes which are unfortunately only too common in all districts where the slave trade continues to exert its baneful influence on districts not effectively controlled by the more humane and liberal-minded of the European races. Unhappily in the year 1903 there is no Wilberforce to raise the standard of revolt against the encouragement, in certain quarters, of this wicked traffic, whose fertile seeds sow discord, degeneracy, and indescribable domestic misery over hundreds of thousands of square miles of the Africa of to-day, depriving whole districts — and often promising districts — of the means to develop the latent resources of a long-neglected continent. Had all Europe stood honourably by its obligations and insisted on the abolition of the slave trade, in practice as well as in theory, the wailing cries for more labour for mines and plantations would not be heard to-day in South Africa, nor would their echoes resound in such cities of the civilised world as are interested in the development of the continent. No doubt domestic slavery is not an unmixed evil even from the African's point of view. A useless creature is not infrequently made useful as well as content on being converted from a naked drone into a well-fed household drudge. There are numerous instances on record in upper Egypt, at Zanzibar

and elsewhere, where slaves of this class have refused to avail themselves of laws proclaiming their freedom, — so far is a primitive race, which in its present generation is fit for little else, held in a bondage, not necessarily inhumane, and compelled to be useful whether they will or not. It is not then altogether in the interests of the domestic slave of to-day that this old-world system needs to be reformed out of existence, but rather in the interests of their descendants and the world at large; for how can those who are deprived of all power of personal initiative, of all sense of responsibility, and of every stimulus to work out their own material salvation, be expected to do otherwise than retain the half-human, half-animal, undeveloped faculties bred in them through a thousand generations of oppression and insecurity? There are other conditions which, except to the few travellers and missionaries who have wandered far afield, are buried beneath the surface and not seen and therefore scarcely realised, and sometimes, it would almost appear, thought to be extinct by the people of the civilised world and those whose personal knowledge of Africa is confined to coast towns and reclaimed districts. I allude to the circumstances under which the ranks of domestic slavery are recruited from the far interior. It is impossible for a man imbued with the most elementary feelings of sympathy with distress, or the crudest principles of humanity, to retain his equanimity in the face of the sense of insecurity and hapless misery pervading some hundreds of miles of the routes travelled by members of the expedition under discussion; or for one who is personally cognisant of the history of the slave from the time he is dragged from the ruins of a home, stained with the blood of young children, aged parents, or husband — all in fact who are too old to be of saleable value or too young for the shackle — down to the time when the victim is either felled to the ground because too exhausted to march, or enters the coast towns under the cloak of "free labour," to refrain from entering a protest against this hell-bound practice. How can the nation which encourages such a system hope to prosper? How can those nations

which look on with apathy do so without a stain on their good name? Among such tribes as the Mambunda special facilities are offered for the successful collection of slaves. Their lack of cohesion added to greed and a cruel disregard of each for his neighbour leads to robbery and outrage. Not that the Mambunda are either less humane or more avaricious than the vast majority of the African races — for they are all tarred with the same brush; but being scattered and for the most part far removed from central control, such incidents as the one related below are scarcely heard of, and still less looked upon as matters of concern beyond the precincts of the district in which they occur.

The chief Mwenechachinge drew my attention to several fresh bullet marks and twisted arrow heads in his palisade, and *à propos* of these, this is the tale he told:—

A few months earlier a man of Kouwewe — a village on the high ground at which we had halted at midday — having possessed himself of an old muzzle-loader, sallied forth in pursuit of game, but, to his intense chagrin, blazed away several rounds without satisfactory results. At a village a few days' journey to the north there lived a distinguished "doctor," and to him the disconsolate sportsman repaired and poured out his trouble into apparently sympathetic ears. The doctor assured his patient that he possessed all the medicines necessary to effect a cure. The fee was arranged, and so confident was the doctor in the efficacy of his medicine that he agreed to defer payment until the cure had been effected.

The jubilant sportsman returned to his village, made a number of incisions in his wrist, and rubbed in the medicine as prescribed.

In due course, eager and confident, he once more shouldered his old blunderbus. But alas, his hopes were to be blighted, for—strange to relate!—not a bullet found its mark. Angry and disappointed, he vowed he would not pay the bill, and when a deputy called for payment, he took back the message, "Your medicine is worthless, so you must do without payment."

A week later the doctor gathered together the warriors of his own and two neighbouring villages, and preparations were made for an excursion against Kouwewe. They halted near Chachinge *en route*, gazed up at the steep ascent beyond, on which the objective village lay hidden a few miles away, and felt less and less inclined to toil up-hill for a further half day. There is a way out of most difficulties, and these raiders found one out of theirs.

"Why should we toil up this long hill? Here is Chachinge close to us; it will do just as well."

So they set to without further ado, and blazed away with their old muzzle-loaders and bows and arrows for three days. Chachinge's gardens were destroyed, but his enemies failed to break through the stockade. Thus the doctor returned home without his fee, and the patient on the hill suffered no inconvenience.

It is on such pretexts that villages are attacked with the ulterior object of providing slaves — principally women and children — for the Mambare traders of the west. Such chiefs as Lebebe go one better, and actually sell the children of their own subjects in order to provide themselves with powder and cloth, which, before they had exterminated the elephants of their country, were paid for with ivory.

Mwenechachinge begged me to use my influence with Lewanika with a view to putting a stop to these constant raids. "I belong to Lewanika," he said; "so do they. It is not good that the children of one father should quarrel and fight with one another." I assured him I would do what I could for him and his people, and am glad to be able to state that, at a later date, some of the cruel irregularities in this southwestern district of the Marotse dominions received a severe check by the timely coöperation of Lewanika with the energetic administrator of North Western Rhodesia. Unfortunately the long-standing differences with Portugal on the frontier question have hitherto tied Mr. Coryndon's hands to a detrimental extent, otherwise the slave trade in this part of Africa would to-day be an evil of the past.

A long march of about thirty miles brought us to Chilemo, a village on the Kundumbia a few miles above its confluence with the Lomba. This was the first of a cluster of villages, occupied by immigrant Valovale, or, as the Marotse call them, Malobale, who, enticed by the rubber fields of the district, have quitted their old homes in the north for new ones four hundred miles distant. During the ensuing fortnight we passed many of these Valovale settlements; in fact, the number of them was almost in excess of that of the Mambunda villages. The two tribes who thus dwell in close contact do not intermarry or mix freely one with the other, though, generally speaking, they live on terms of peace; that is to say, as much so as do the Mambunda among themselves. Each tribe uses its own language, and both in type and general characteristics they have little in common. The Mambunda are very black, of impassive demeanour, high in the cheek bone, and as a rule have noses which tend to point downward. Those of the Valovale have an upward tendency, and they themselves are of a dark copper colour, and are blessed with a more cheerful countenance than their neighbours. The hair of the Valovale is fashioned like a close-fitting mat and is coloured red, while the Mambunda wear theirs in greasy ringlets which hang down the neck in dirt and regularity. The latter dwell in conical grass huts. Their villages are invariably small and surrounded by strong stockades. The former do not waste their energy on defensive work, and live in square huts over which creepers are frequently trained. These Valovale are amongst Lewanika's most loyal subjects, and are in this respect unlike their countrymen in Lovale, who since the Portuguese made their appearance there eight years ago have been largely tempted from the path of duty in this respect. At Chilemo, and in fact at most of the Valovale settlements, I found small herds of cattle belonging to Lewanika, whose custom it is to distribute his surplus stock among his more trusty subjects, allowing them such milk as is not required for the calves, and occasionally treating them to a feast off an ox.

On May 26th I was once more on the banks of the Kwito. Though two hundred miles farther upstream than when I last saw the river it did not appear to have diminished in size nor changed in character, though the undulations which bordered on the inundated plain were both steeper and higher, rising to about sixty feet above the swamp.

Having heard from natives that there was a Portuguese trading-station on the opposite bank of the river, I engaged a small canoe and a couple of paddlers to ferry me across. This was a tedious procedure, as not only was the plain two miles wide, but the canoe had to be forced through long, matted grass which in places rose a couple of feet above the water. The river proper is here about two hundred feet wide and marvellously clear, the clean-cut banks being visible for twelve or fifteen feet below the surface. Surely this river, with its very gradual fall, unusual freedom from rapids, and capable as it is of being connected with the Zambezi through the Okavango and Magwekwana, will one day be turned to account as a cheap line of communication between the healthy rubber-producing uplands of the northwest and the railway from the south.

It took my paddlers just one hour to paddle, or, more correctly speaking, to punt me to the opposite side of the swamp, and then, accompanied by Jack, I set off in search of the Portuguese trading-station; but, after following the river for two miles, I found in place of it a few broken-down huts abandoned by the natives who had occupied them, which now served as the temporary residence of a "black Portuguese" and his two wives. It transpired that he was in the employ of an English syndicate who had established a station on a right-bank tributary of the Kwito, a few days' march to the northwest, and was developing trade in rubber with England through Mossamedes. The coloured gentleman whom misinformation had brought me over the river to visit, was father to a "black Portuguese" — very much black and very little Portuguese — whom I had seen at a village called Liuma on the Chimbimba, a left-bank Kwito tributary. It



Sketch of Rubber Plant

was the youth's duty to purchase rubber in the surrounding district; and the stock thus collected was periodically transferred to the main station for transmission to Mossamedes.

From about 15° 30′ south latitude there is to be found a modest little indigenous plant attaining a height of some twelve inches above the surface. Its underground growth is out of all proportion to the outward and visible signs of its existence, which almost escapes notice amid the surrounding vegetation. Long, straight roots which might almost better be described as subterranean branches — for when removed and cleaned of earth they have all the appearance of the latter and none of the former — run horizontally a few inches below the surface, frequently attaining the thickness of a man's arm and a length of a dozen feet and more. From this, small feeding tendons grow downward, and the glazed-leafed little bush springs upward at short intervals. This is one of the many species of rubber plant to be found in Africa. It may be recognised by the shape and glossy nature of the leaf, from which, when broken, there exudes a milky white liquid, which at once congeals on the fingers. I reproduce a sketch I made from a plucked twig, which if taken with the foregoing description should enable the traveller to recognise the plant. It is usually found in open ground, on the tops of undulations, and is seldom met with at a lower altitude than four thousand feet. I imagine it is peculiar to these latitudes. In the dry season those natives who are engaged in the industry form temporary camps in the more prolific districts, where the sound of the little wooden mallet used to separate the fibre is to be heard in all directions. The process of preparation is sevenfold:—

I. The "branches" are cut into lengths of rather more than a foot, and stacked till dry;

II. They are soaked in water for ten days;

III. They are then hammered on a block with a wooden mallet until the fibres separate;

IV. Are still further dried, and exposed to the heat of the sun;

V. Hammered again until the rubber congeals;
VI. Boiled and cleaned of fibre; and
VII. Washed in cold water.

The rubber thus extracted and cleaned of all extraneous matter is worked into strips about a foot in length and tied in small bundles, in which form it eventually finds its way to the European markets.

This rubber industry has quite taken a hold on the natives in this part of Africa, for they find it a most profitable source of income. In the Mambunda country the natural owners of the soil sit idly by while the Valovale immigrants enrich themselves with the cloth, beads, and other fanciful articles of trade with Europe which should be theirs.

We now finally turned our backs on the Kwito, and following its small affluent, the Navale, and its tributaries, gradually ascended the high ridge of ground which divides the waters of the Kwando and Kwito rivers. The country here is quite picturesque, and the undulations are much steeper and higher than those in the country we had left behind. As we approached the Kwando side of the watershed, a tree which I have not seen in any other part of Africa took quite a prominent place amidst the general vegetation of the district. In both shade and shape of leaf, and to some extent in stem, it closely resembles the yew tree of Europe, and being at once so common and so widely divergent in character from the class of tree which dominates this part of Africa, its appearance quite transforms the forest scenery of the district, and imparts to it an aspect distinctly foreign to what I had been accustomed. On descending into the Kwando basin, it vanished as suddenly as it had appeared, and I have seen no more of it since. Here and there in the same district is to be seen an elegant shrub — at the time of my visit in full flower — which forcibly called the azalea to my mind.

Villages, as heretofore, were dotted about in proximity to the rich alluvial valleys formed by the many rivers which flow past the base of the undulations. Now the path would lead



Natives Bringing in Rubber Wood

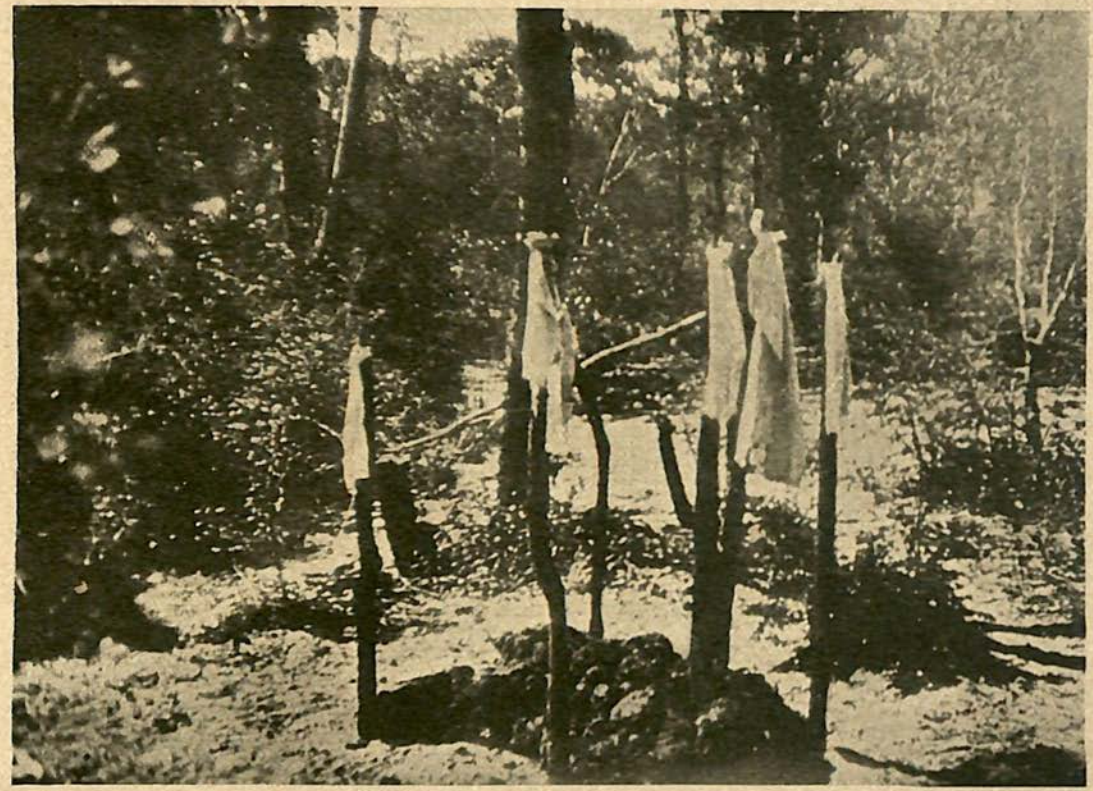


Interior of Valovale Village

past a Mambunda stockade planted in a flat alluvial valley, now through a Valovale settlement for which a site had invariably been selected on the forest-clad slopes overlooking some river. Both these tribes are extremely superstitious, the Valovale particularly so. For the spirits of the dead they have a special regard, and while traversing the forest it is by no means exceptional to pass miniature huts, only a few inches high, surrounded by a proportionate wooden fence. These are a considerate provision for the accommodation of departed spirits. On one occasion I chanced upon the grave of a recently expired Kalovale. There was the usual mound of loose earth marking the grave, and at the four corners were planted upright posts four feet in height. Attached to the top of each of these was a strip of calico, the money of the country, which had been so placed as a token of respect for the dead. Also immediately in front of the grave there was a miniature rack on which hung several small strips of meat about the size of an ordinary earthworm, and with this the late lamented one is supposed to refresh himself at his leisure. It is impossible to say how far all this preparation for the comfort of the dead is made from motives of affection, or how far from a sense of dread lest an angry and neglected spirit should mar his interests by turning everything topsy-turvy; but the owner of this grave would certainly be a most unworthy spirit did he not treat his human relatives with every consideration. It is interesting to compare the African's token of respect for the departed with that which is prevalent in civilised communities. He has no sentiment whatever in his composition; he is above all things a materialist. Primitive man has no conception of the beautiful, and for this the majority of his womenkind should be grateful! He cannot aspire to that refined sentiment which prompts the higher races to place plants and wreaths of flowers over the mortal remains of those they love and respect. Still, these Valovale do their best. The possession of wealth, as he conceives it, together with plenty of meat, are to him the only things for which life is worth living; therefore he bestows a few dirty

rags and as much meat as would go to make a small mouthful on those who are no more.

Preparatory to crossing the rivers of this country, it is first necessary to wade through a morass of black, spongy mud; then the traveller is ferried across a stream of deep, clear water in a "dugout" canoe, seldom measuring more than fifteen inches across amidships; afterwards a second morass must be traversed before dry ground is reached. Such a river is the Kwembo, one of the most important affluents of the upper Kwando, and the canoe which ferried me across — or, to be strictly accurate, did not ferry me across — was so narrow that when I sat down I overlapped on both sides. After watching some of the loads over with no little anxiety for their safety, I took my seat in or rather on this flimsy imitation of a boat. There was room for only one article at a time besides the paddler, and when that article was a normal human being the water was in places flush with the gunwale. It is not therefore surprising that on reaching midstream, the motive power, after losing first his balance and then his head, deposited me in the river, and I had perforce to arrive at the opposite bank independently of the canoe. Later a case of groceries suffered a like fate, and although the contents were afterward dried in the sun, part of them were by no means improved by their submersion.



A Valovale Grave

CHAPTER XVII

Where the KUBANGUI meets the KWANDO — Disappointed hopes — No mails — Captain Quicke's departure — Captain Hamilton's non-arrival — A fatal throat malady — DIMBUDI a MAMBUNDA chief — Three baskets of corn and a pig — Dimbudi's presumption — A comical episode — Head men demand permission to return home — Trouble brewing — Two days with pen and ink — Disaffection disseminated — Litsolo warned — Affected repentance — Farewell to Dimbudi — Open meeting — A change of plan necessary — A few plain words — Native simplicity — Start for LIALUI — A Portuguese trader — Through MAKOMA — Head men curry favour — The theft of Jonas — Remanded — MOSIKA at home — His appreciation of praise — Loss of ten relatives — His own death a month later — Three hundred miles in a fortnight — Arrival at Lialui — Lewanika's surprise and anger — Captain Hamilton deserted — Monsieur Jalla's hospitality — Lewanika builds a compound — Jonas arraigned — His punishment — Good news and bad — An African hardship — Mr. Muller's death confirmed — A loss to Africa — The trial of Luombomba and Litsolo — An interesting tribunal — The dignity of the law — Verdict and penalty

CHAPTER XVII

AFRICAN JUSTICE

On the 2d of June we descended a steep wooded hill into the valley where the Kubangui meets the Kwando. I was hopeful of not only finding Captains Quicke and Hamilton awaiting my arrival, but also of receiving the English mail, which I had directed Sefunganyambe, who, it will be remembered, was sent to Lialui from Lebebe, to bring on to me as soon after its arrival as possible. But alas! Captain Quicke had departed only twelve hours previous to my appearance. He left a note explaining that a fatal throat malady was rampant among the natives; that one of his porters had been seized with the disease and died, and that the rest were becoming nervous, so he deemed it wise to get them on the move and take them as quickly as possible out of the infected district. He had been camped on the Kubangui for seventeen days. Of Captain Hamilton I could hear nothing, beyond the fact that a white man, whom I assumed to be he, was reported to be several days' journey down the Kwando. Sefunganyambe had not arrived, so there was no English mail. The last letter I had received from home was dated Christmas Day, and it was now June, and might be months before I again struck a line of communication with Lialui, as my plans were to travel north to the Congo-Zambezi watershed, follow it to the source of the Zambezi, and return thence to Burotse. However, Mr. Coryndon and Lewanika had not forgotten me, having sent letters by Captain Quicke. I decided to devote a few days to the plotting of my map up to date, trusting that before I moved on Captain Hamilton would put in an appearance. Dimbudi, the Mambunda chief

over the Kapali district, a tract of country contained in the angle formed by the Kwando and Kubangui rivers, behaved more hospitably than most of his fellow-tribesmen, for I have never been among a people from whom it is more difficult to obtain food supplies than these Mambunda. Within an hour of pitching camp, which I did half a mile from Dimbudi's village, there arrived a present of three large baskets of corn and a pig. The following day I witnessed one of those pantomimic episodes which occasionally amuse the traveller.

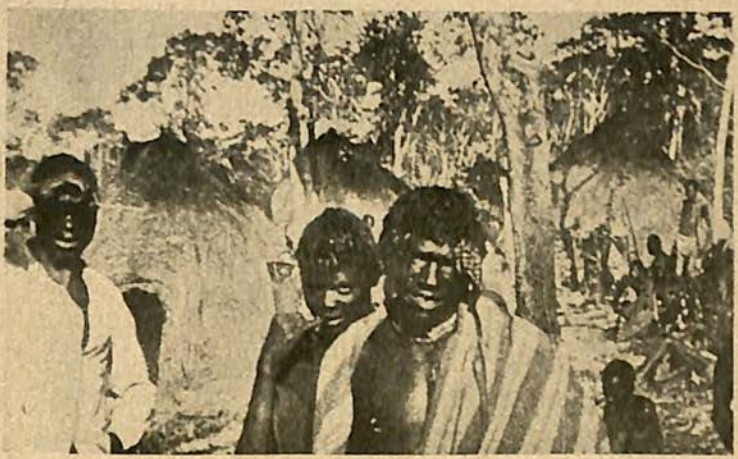
Myself expecting a call from Dimbudi, I received a message from that worthy to the effect that he should be glad if I would go to see him. Now the character of the African is such, that it is advisable in the traveller's interests that he should assume a certain amount of dignity in dealing with him. To big chiefs, such as Lewanika and Khama, it is right and customary for the white man to pay the first call, but not so with the small fry. Therefore word went back that I should be glad to receive him in the cool of the evening at my camp.

In a quarter of an hour the messenger returned: "Dimbudi says he is a very big chief, and expects the white man to come and see him first. Later he will visit the white man."

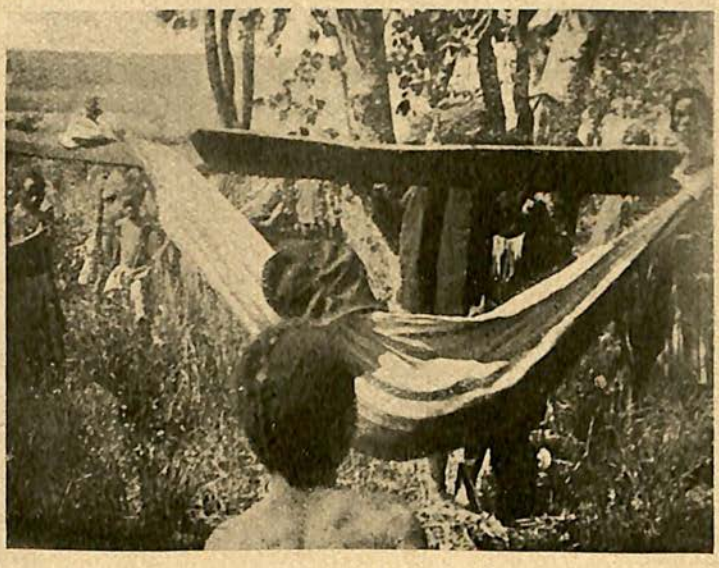
The answer to this was:—

"Tell your master the white man does not question his importance, but that he, being a still bigger chief, expects Dimbudi to visit him in the cool of the evening, when he will be glad to converse with him."

Scarcely half an hour later a crowd of men, women, and children shouting vociferously, was seen to leave the village. As this rabble neared camp, it was seen to be heralded by a man carrying a long stick, quite twenty feet high, on the top of which was tied a piece of coloured limbo. It was closely followed by something in the nature of a hammock slung from a pole borne on the shoulders of four native bearers. Within this there was something, the nature of which it was impossible to diagnose from any outward indication, though I had a shrewd suspicion that it contained an article less inanimate than a bag of corn. The procession



Typical Mambunda Chief



Dimdudi's Arrival

halted within a few feet of my tent, the people fell back, and from the hammock there appeared a black head, surmounted by an old top hat, which, in the owner's anxiety to make his first appearance impressive under cover of this handsome headpiece, had slipped partly forward and partly sideways over the right eye. This was slowly followed by the rest of the presence of the great Dimbudi, who shortly stood before me clad in his very best, — a pair of very old evening dress trousers, much too long for the wearer, and looking something like a couple of concertinas in their lower extremities, a red serge coat much too small and short in the sleeves, and the old top hat, fixed with jaunty effect, and of course brushed against the grain.

Nervous and ill at ease, the great man stood before me till I came to his rescue, shook a very limp hand, and waved him to his own ponderous, crudely carved chair which his attendants had set for him.

During the conversation that ensued my visitor drank a cup of coffee and tried to lie himself into a very much bigger position than he occupied in reality, and finally betaking himself once more to his hammock, returned whence he came.

Dimbudi had scarcely left when my chiefs squatted down in front of me and respectfully demanded their pay, urging that they had travelled far enough, and wished to return to Burotse. They were given clearly to understand that if they returned to Burotse without my consent, they would do so without any pay whatsoever. On their endeavouring to argue the point, they were peremptorily dismissed, with the warning that if, when ordered to renew the journey, they refused to do so, I should have nothing more to do with them until I reached Lialui, when I should arraign them before Lewanika, and see that they suffered according to their deserts.

The next two days were spent with pen and ink. The rest immediately proved beneficial to my sore foot, which at last showed signs of healing, each day of the past three weeks having seen the wound angrier and more painful than the preceding one.

On the 10th of June, after eight days' delay, during which I had completed my map and written a thick mail for home, I decided to make preparations for an early start for the north on the following morning, and orders were given to that effect. At night, as the boys chatted round their fires, I imagined from what I overheard of snatches of conversation that Luombomba, and Litsolo — who now showed signs of throwing in his lot with his objectionable colleague — had been sowing the seeds of insubordination among the rank and file of the caravan. In consequence, I sent for Litsolo, taxed him with disloyalty, and gave him clearly to understand that if any difficulty arose in the way of starting on the morrow, I should hold him and Luombomba responsible, and that as sure as Lewanika was my trusted friend, they would suffer severely for their obstruction. Later I was told by Jack that they had repented and were prepared to go wherever I cared to lead them. Early in the morning, after seeing the tent struck and the goods packed, I gave Lefatse instructions to allot loads to the porters, and proceeded to Dimbudi's village, to bid that chief good-by, and leave with him a letter for delivery to Captain Hamilton on his arrival. On my return, Luombomba calmly informed me that the boys had started, and, pointing to two or three loads on the ground, remarked that there were not enough porters to carry them. I then saw that where two small packets went to make up one load, this irritating creature had divided them between two boys. I ordered him to call in the boys immediately, but both he and Litsolo sat motionless and impudently silent. How true is the saying that the African combines in his person the stupidity of the ass and the obstinacy of the ox! At that moment I felt no less keen on the possession of half a dozen donkeys than did the vanquished Richard for the much-hackneyed horse on the field of Bosworth. My first impulse was to kick my mutinous chiefs out of camp, burn all but a few necessaries, and proceed with Jack and my five Zambezi boys. Of one thing I was quite certain — to attempt another eighteen hundred miles with my present caravan was out of the

question. On reflection, it occurred to me that to return to Lialui and make a fresh start would, on the whole, afford a better chance of the full attainment of the objects in view. I therefore sent for my recalcitrant head men and addressed them in the severest tones I could command.

"Yes, you *shall* go to Burotse, and I will go with you, and remember that as sure as Lewanika is my friend, you shall suffer for your behaviour. I have warned you of the consequence of your disobedience. I will not relent." And within ten minutes I had turned my face eastward. An instance of native simplicity or of their belief in the simplicity of the white man introduced an element of mirth into the very trying circumstances of my last half-hour at Kapali. I had told Dimbudi that if he would send me corn, I should give him a present of a shirt. The sole response was a visit from seven of his people. Each carried a very small basket containing two or three handfuls of corn, and each wanted a shirt! On the second day of the journey, the Kuti River was crossed at a place called Kalomo. Here I found a white Portuguese who was trading — principally in rubber — as agent of a large firm of European merchants. He informed me that he expected a waggon to remove him and his goods to the coast in the course of the next two months, when he intended burning his station. Captain Quicke had camped here on his way through.

The journey of three hundred miles odd to Lialui was uneventful. Gradually leaving the healthy, undulating uplands, we descended some seven hundred feet into a flat country, covered for the most part with open forest; but as the Zambezi was approached, this opened out into grassy plains which are more or less inundated during the wet season. The greater part of the route lay through the country of the Bamakoma, a tribe which for many generations has been subject to the Marotse dynasty. In the western district of the country the Mambunda have established several villages. There seems to be a disposition on the part of these people to close in on the centre of the black empire to which they

belong, with a view, no doubt, to being more effectively under the protecting influence of the Marotse king, where they can dwell in peace and laziness. As for my chiefs, in vain did they try to gain back my favour, but they received only studied coldness or were absolutely ignored.

"He never greets us in the morning as he used to do, and merely nods his head when we wish him 'lumela,'" I overheard Litsolo say to one of his companions in disgrace. Jonas, the boy who had amused himself at my expense in the matter of the blanket incident, went one step farther and endeavoured to enrich himself — also at my expense. Lead is much in request in these outlandish districts, and with it any native luxury may be readily purchased. In order to possess himself of this coveted metal, Jonas had extracted the lead and powder from a number of my "paradox" cartridges, — of which I carried only a small stock, on account of their excessive weight, — and used these ingredients for trading purposes, throwing away the cases. I had noticed the theft for some time back, but hitherto had failed to locate the thief. My chiefs, who probably could have supplied the name of the guilty one at any moment had they felt so inclined, now thought their time had arrived for the atonement of their own errors at the expense of the wretch Jonas. To this end the culprit, together with as much of his stock in trade as remained in his possession, was brought in front of me. His guilt was soon established, and I determined to adopt the same line of treatment as I had done in the case of his accusers — to remand the prisoner until arrival at Lialui, where Lewanika could apply his own method of punishment. At the same time I ordered him to be kept a close prisoner, to be made to carry a heavy load during the day, and to be bound hand and foot at night, for I had no intention of letting the twice-guilty rascal escape his deserts.

One night toward the close of the journey we slept on a long, narrow ridge of high ground which separates a western strip of the swamps of Burotse from the main plain. I was glad to find myself encamped within a half-mile of a village

of which the chief was Mosika, the head man of the crew which took me from Lialui to Sesheke a few months earlier. He was one of the few natives with whom it was a pleasure to deal — always ready to comply with his master's wishes, and, what is more, continually performing little services quite gratuitously. When he left me, he carried with him a letter in which I eulogised him in accordance with his merits.

"Lewanika," he said to me, "was much pleased with the praise you gave me."

"I praised you, Mosika, because you deserved praise, and I am only too glad to hear that my letter has done you good in the eyes of the Morena [king, or "chief of the blood"]. I had hoped to be able to do the same for Litsolo and Luombomba, but they have failed to obey the king's orders, and to-morrow they will receive blame and not praise."

In the course of subsequent conversation the poor fellow described how, on his return home, he found that no less than ten of his family, including his aged father, had succumbed to the throat complaint referred to by Captain Quicke at Kapali. This I imagine to have been a form of diphtheria. A month later Lewanika sent one of his household chiefs to my camp with the sad news that a messenger had just come in to say that Mosika himself had fallen a victim to the disease and had died that morning. Exactly a fortnight after my mutinous chiefs compelled an alteration in my plans we arrived on the banks of the Zambezi. We had moved rapidly, the daily average being twenty-two miles. Lewanika, as I anticipated, was both surprised at my sudden reappearance and wroth with his refractory subjects. After giving him a few bald facts, I added, "We will go into details in a day or two; for the present we will devote ourselves to pleasanter subjects." The native mind is ever slow to work, and I wished the king to ponder over the case before bringing matters to a head, for, as I had told the accused, I had no intention of relenting.

Special messengers were immediately sent to Mr. Coryndon and Captain Hamilton, who, it appeared, had been deserted

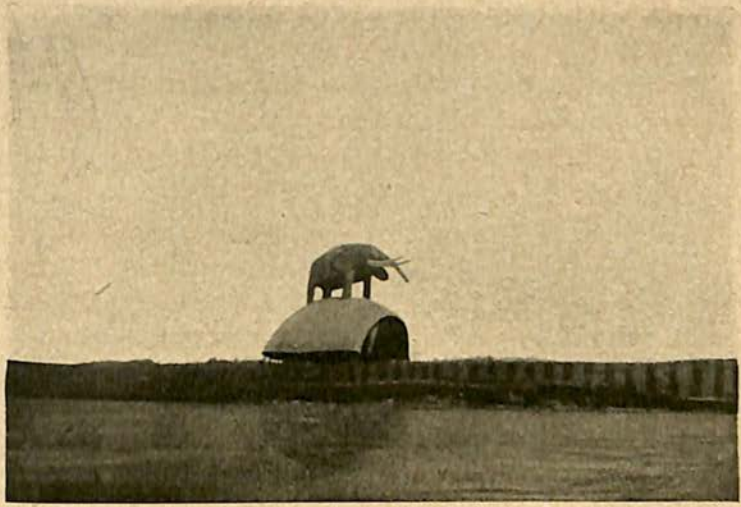
by his porters on the Kwando. He had, however, been able, through one of his head men, to communicate with Lewanika, who promptly sent a relief party to his rescue.

Monsieur Adolph Jalla very kindly placed a room at my disposal at the mission station, but, as my stay was likely to be a lengthy one, I asked Lewanika to provide me with a good, fenced-in hut.

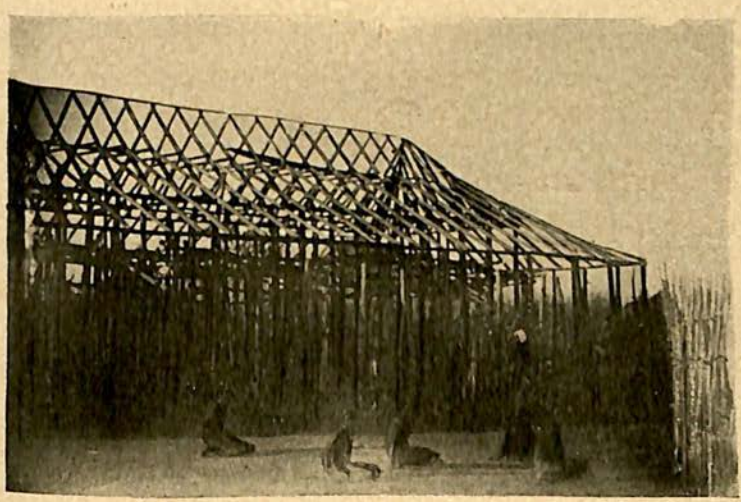
"I will build you one," he said, after a moment's thought. "I think that would be best," and he referred me to the fact that although he had given me a thoroughly cleaned and replastered hut in '95, I had nevertheless been compelled to seek outdoor relief from certain irritating influences which made their appearance within.

In a remarkably short time the new quarters were ready. A courtyard, surrounded by a fence seven feet high, was cemented with the cement of the country — a mixture of cow dung and the earth from ant heaps. Within this space were included five or six banana trees, which offered excellent shade from the heat of the midday sun. There was room for our three tents, the kitchens, and ample elbow room besides.

On the 3d of July Jonas and another boy, who had been caught plundering my private provision store, were arraigned before a couple of chiefs whom Lewanika had appointed to judge them. They were found guilty and sentenced to be flogged. The latter took his punishment stoically, and in consequence got off comparatively lightly, but Jonas, after he had received a few cuts, seized the sjambok, and thus resisted the course of justice. His judges thereupon ordered him to be "strangled," an unpleasant form of punishment, much resorted to when severe chastisement is contemplated. The victim undergoes the first and consequently most unpleasant stages of asphyxiation. Unless, however, it is intended that he shall breathe no more, the grip of the throat is relaxed before life is extinct, and the culprit is allowed to recover his senses at leisure, and return to the ordinary walks of life with the memory of a lesson learnt. I must confess



The "Nalikwanda"—Lewanika's State Barge



Framework of Akatoka's House

that to watch the infliction of this barbarous form of punishment is far from pleasant, even when applied to a Jonas; but I considered it neither right nor politic to interfere, especially since the boy was a very fitting person of whom to make an example.

That same day was an eventful one for me. It brought good news and bad news. Toward evening the mail, which had missed me on a journey to the Kubangui and back, was handed in by Sefunganyambe, and within an hour later the English mail was delivered. With the first was a cablegram, which, since leaving Sesheke, had travelled an aggregate of two thousand miles through the bush in the hands of one native or another. It announced the birth of my firstborn — a daughter — six months previously. With the second came a letter from the mother, written when the child was already four and one-half months old! This perpetual bad luck with my mails, which dogged me without intermission throughout the whole two years, caused me, as may be imagined, many hours of anxiety. It almost seemed as though his Satanic Majesty, having found me so far inured to the everyday annoyances and worries inseparable from African travel as almost to ignore them, had successfully diagnosed my weak spot and was "running it for all he was worth." A letter also arrived from Mr. Weller, giving definite news of poor Mr. Muller's death, which occurred at Tete about Christmas, '98. His loyalty had killed him; for, fearing lest his comrades should be cut off from supplies, he had made three attempts to follow with the disease still on him. The third time he got as far as Kashombe on his way to Zumbo, whence it became necessary to carry him back to Tete in great pain. Had he thought more of himself and less of us, he would have taken the necessary rest, and most probably thrown off the disease. By his death the forward movement, which is so rapidly transforming the African continent, has been robbed of one whose qualities and accomplishments would have rendered him of the greatest possible value. I am convinced that a longer lease of life would have placed

him in an honourable position among the best of his contemporaries, for he was possessed not merely of strength and ability, but of noble aspirations also. Never had I seen physical and mental vigour so forcibly and practically combined. We had all taken a great fancy to his frank and genuine character; and although the disquieting rumours which had reached us in March had, to some extent, prepared us for the worst, the news of the loss of our friend and colleague fell as a very heavy blow on all of us.

The next day was appointed for the trial of the chiefs. I had a long interview with Lewanika in the early morning on things in general and the defaulting chiefs in particular. As the hour of the trial drew near, he asked me to precede him to the "Kothla." Within the building a large assemblage of chiefs had already collected, while groups of people squatted in the open space beyond. Presently the sound of music greeted the ears of those present, as the king, preceded by the royal band, emerged from his courtyard, and, leisurely crossing the intervening square, took his seat on a chair in the midst of his chiefs — those of the household on his right, the remainder on the left. As he sat down, the people rendered the usual salute, and shouts of "Mighty chief!" were mingled with the claps of scores of hands. On the renewal of silence, the king called the president of the court to the front and gave him directions in an undertone. Then, turning to me, he said he should very much like me to be present during the proceedings, so that I might be in a position to refute any misstatements made by the prisoners. He himself would retire, and subsequently the court would report their finding, and he would pass sentence.

I was now to witness a feature in the management of a native African state which came as a complete revelation to me; for although I was well aware that the Marotse are, in most respects, in advance of their fellows, I was not prepared to see justice — usually so summarily administered in Africa — treated in the same spirit of fairness and liberality as in more highly civilised countries.

The court consisted of three first-grade chiefs, of whom the husband of the king's sister, Akatoka, sat as president, as well as some fifty second-grade chiefs — peers of the accused. The three big men sat on chairs, supported to right and left by their juniors, who sat on the ground in double rows. As well as Luombomba and Litsolo, Lefatse and Kalima were arraigned in front of the tribunal. Addressing the president, I said I had nothing against the two latter, as I felt they had acted under the influence of their superiors in the matter before the court, whereas in other respects they had always behaved well. They were therefore directed to withdraw.

The Mokwetunga (son-in-law to the king) — a title enjoyed by all who marry a princess of the blood — opened the proceedings by charging the two prisoners to this effect: —

"You, Luombomba, and you, Litsolo, are accused of disobeying the king's orders, inasmuch as you made it impossible for the white man to continue his journey, and complete the work he had undertaken in the interests of the king."

Then addressing Luombomba, he asked: —

"What excuse for your conduct do you make?"

Luombomba, speaking with his usual silvery fluency, said he knew it was the king's wish that he should accompany the white man to Lovale, but that he adopted the course he had for two reasons: first, the boys wished to return to their homes, as they were hungry, and food was scarce; secondly, he feared that when they reached Nyakatoro the people would plunder the white man.

In response to this, I detailed how, on the very afternoon before the mutiny, one of the porters brought me two pumpkins for sale. I offered to give him some of my own meal in return, but he said he preferred caps (percussion). "But," I replied, "I am told you have difficulty in getting food; surely meal will be more useful." His answer was, "No, I have plenty of food in my calabash; I prefer caps."

"Does this," I asked, "look as though hunger was so severe as Luombomba would make you believe? As to Luombomba's second excuse — it is very kind of him to show

such anxiety for the safety of my goods, but I have travelled great distances through your country, and you know that I am quite capable of taking care of myself and my belongings."

Litsolo, in his defence, said, "I was anxious lest when the boys passed through villages they would fight with the people, and take their food from them by force, and this would lead to trouble."

To this I replied: "We had already passed through the countries of the Masubia, the Makalahari, the Maiye, the Mampukushu, the Makwengari, and the Mambunda, yet the boys did not attempt to fight or to rob any of these; why, then, should their future conduct in this direction give anxiety?"

And now I had to listen to over fifty speeches, as each gave his opinion and his reasons for it. First the junior of the second-grade chiefs held forth, then the next junior, and so on, until the senior had expressed his views. One would dilate on the case so far as it concerned Luombomba, another would pick Litsolo to pieces, some would couple the two together.

"You say you were tired and hungry," said one. "The white man has travelled all the way from England in addition to the journey you have shared with him, yet he never complained of being tired, but wished to finish the journey he had begun. Are you men, that you should talk thus? Or are you women and children?"

Another would enlarge on the pumpkin incident. Each had his argument in condemnation of the accused, and at length they had all said their say. I was told that the second-grade chiefs spoke in order of juniority, lest the younger should be influenced by the opinions of their seniors — just as, for the same reason, the junior officers on a court martial precede their superiors in rank. However, the same rule was not followed when it came to the turn of the three great men. They were of the grade which supplies the high officers of state — who are credited with having the courage of their own opinions. Therefore, as in the case of the judges of our supreme court, the president was the first to pronounce his decision, then the next senior, and lastly the junior.

The faces of the two prisoners were a study during these somewhat lengthy proceedings. Luombomba wore the expression of a child in disgrace; Litsolo, on the other hand, squatted on the ground, leaning slightly forward. On his head was an old "bowler" hat cocked well to one side and forward on the forehead. The right cheek was screwed up, thereby half closing the eye above it. All together the expression he wore was one of sullen impudence.

At the end of the proceedings I congratulated the court on the fair and dignified manner in which the prisoners had been brought to trial. I told them if, when there was trouble between white men and black, they always administered justice to their own people with fairness and impartiality, there would be no trouble with the English government of the country, for Englishmen did not take away the rights of those who use them properly. After the Mokwetunga and his two colleagues had notified the finding of the court to Lewanika, I had a personal interview with the king on the subject. At first he suggested that Litsolo should be flogged, but I threw cold water on the suggestion, more especially as he had up to a certain point proved himself a useful servant to me, and if one only deserved a flogging, it was not Litsolo.

"Litsolo," I urged, "is a chief; flogging is a punishment for slaves. You must keep up the dignity of your chiefs in the eyes of the people or their authority will not be respected, and they will not be able to impose your wishes. I would suggest that you speak severely to them and fine them. This will make them sorry for themselves, and show others that the disobedient suffer."

He fell in with the suggestion, and each was fined an ox.

They were also made to feel their position in another way. Sefunganyambe, who, being absent on other duties, had no share in the mutinous conduct of his colleagues, received in addition to his pay a variety of presents such as the native values. The others received their bare pay, and an expression of regret that they deserved no present.

CHAPTER XVIII

Captain Quicke reaches Lialui — Thin but well — His visit to the Victoria Falls — River journey — Visit to Lewanika at Mafula — His journey westwards — Everything red — Commandeered carriers — Tact required in dealing with them — The Mambunda country — A description of the people and country — Bark blankets — The first white man at KAPALI — Efficacious method of banishing evil spirits — A fatal malady — Sickening of a porter — A native remedy — The rubber district — Dimbudi's timidity — His subsequent dignity — Symbols of idolatry — Passive resistance — Native wealth and independence — Ovimbunda or Mambari — Travel-stained Englishman misunderstood — Insolence — Humility — Mr. Arnot's route — Marotse head men agitate for return — High altitude — Absence of animal life — The LUNGWEBUNGU — A fine river — Homely ways of the VALUCHASI — A few days' sport — Arrival at main camp — Lunch with Lewanika — His respectful treatment of the Great White Queen's portrait — A well-ordered table — Lewanika's commercial aptitude — His shortsightedness — A little advice — A monster bird hunt — Captain Hamilton arrives — A tedious journey — Desertion and sport — The BAMASHE — The food question — The water-logged KWANDO — Relief party — Journey to LIALUI — Mr. Coryndon's arrival — Arrangements for return home — A farewell dinner — The four points of the compass — Perfect unanimity — Misrepresentation through press — Time will tell

CHAPTER XVIII

CAPTAIN QUICKE'S JOURNEY

MUCH to my delight Captain Quicke marched into Lialui on the 20th of July. He was very thin, as would be expected after a long journey on foot of fourteen hundred miles, in which he had kept up the splendid daily average of rather more than twenty miles. Otherwise he was well, and now that our experience showed that the aspirations of the expedition were likely to be fully realised, the pessimistic forebodings which had haunted his sensitive nature in the earlier days had given place to confidence and a happier frame of mind. He had made a splendid journey, and taken characteristic pains to impart thoroughness to his work.

I will now give a short account of his journey taken from notes prepared during his last voyage to the Cape, where Fate had decreed that after still further proving the sterling value of his character — and much more so in the eyes of his brother officers than of the readers of despatches and the recipients of second-hand news — he should die a soldier's death with a soldier's spirit. After tersely alluding to his visit to the Victoria Falls, paying a characteristic tribute to Mr. Coryndon, "to whose generosity and kindness I am ever indebted," he states that after a three weeks' canoe journey he arrived at Lialui, where he was most kindly entertained by Monsieur and Madame Jalla. From Lialui he went by canoe to Mafula to visit Lewanika, king of the Marotse — "a most courteous king and gentleman." Twelve days later he started on his journey to the west. The plain being in high flood, he spent the last few days of his visit at Mafula, whither the king annually resorts

at this time of the year. After paddling and punting over the submerged plain, and calling at Lialui *en route*, the Zambezi was crossed, and he proceeded on foot to the Luanginga. Here he again took to canoes, and experienced "an unpleasant, crawling journey — no shade all day — being punted and paddled through reeds, stopping every few miles for our paddlers to try and catch other paddlers to take their place." Landing at the confluence of the Luanginga with the Nyengo, he was compelled to wait two days before commencing the land journey. Here he took part in a lechwe hunt, some two hundred natives trying to drive a herd into the river, where armed natives in canoes awaited them in concealment. The country teemed with a very active red mosquito, little red ants, and red beetles, which seemed to take their colour from reeds of a reddish tint. There were also quantities of dark, hairy caterpillars which fed on the rank vegetation of the swamp.

He then comments on travel in these countries of the far interior. "With a few personal servants to carry the loads, it is easy to travel anywhere, and quite pleasant travelling, compared with the trouble one has otherwise — for then it depends on the good-will of their king. He gives you Marotse chiefs who commandeer carriers from the different tribes passed. These commandeered carriers do not own you as their master in any way, and whilst passing through or near their country the greatest patience is required. As you get farther away, then you become your own master, and they begin to know you. Though I had but a dozen loads, generally my following consisted of thirty, for they won't travel except in numbers, and sicken easily. The Marotse chiefs have a few personal followers of their own, and, if told by their king to honour you, look after your comfort if fairly treated and not too hungry or tired, or unless one insists on their travelling far. A first-class Marotse has excellent manners and many good qualities. Litebele Semoilida was one of these."

He now followed the Nyengo River into the country of the Mambunda, a finer race than most, who talk very rapidly

and dwell in well-built villages in the forest, most of them wearing loin cloths and possessing flintlock guns. Forests of small trees of light foliage cover the country. There is no under scrub, and the soil is of a light, sandy nature. Crossing the Nyengo, he traced the Luwe River along a very pretty valley to its source, and actually came across stones, rendered remarkable by the fact that they were the first he had seen since entering the great plain of Burotse. The natives were busily engaged in the rubber industry and in making blankets out of bark, which was soaked, beaten, and kneaded in the process of manufacture. Travelling in a southwesterly direction, a hilly ridge separating the Luwe from the Chikolui was crossed, and the journey was continued to the Kubangui, after passing the Kuti River and the undulating hills running parallel with it on east and west. He was now at the appointed rendezvous, which had been selected as a convenient spot on which to converge our respective routes. As, according to the local natives, Captain Quicke was the first white man to visit this district, it can be readily understood that we had no guide by which to determine the desirability of the locality as a permanent camping ground. We had, so to speak, "bought a pig in a poke" and a very poor one at that. The immediate vicinity of the river was low-lying and damp. The cold, dense mist rising from the river after midnight is especially bad here; it soaks everything and the sun frequently does not penetrate it till 10 o'clock A.M. There was much sickness amongst the inhabitants, who fired off guns all day to keep the evil spirits away. Captain Quicke describes how his boys, who were great smokers of "dagha," —a species of hemp,—having "coughed all their lungs away," and having nothing but unsoaked "manja" (manioc) to eat, began to sicken. One of them who was seemingly well in the morning was reported to be dying at noon. He found him delirious and discharging a green excretion from nose and mouth. No medicine could be passed through his clenched teeth, and, as an alternative, his comrades rolled him in his skin blanket and sat on him—a somewhat extreme

remedy! After four days' incessant groaning his companions one morning carried him out of camp, and he died.

In the rubber district traversed he had encountered communities from different tribes. Though the country was that of the Mambunda, there was also a sprinkling of Valuchasi and Vachibokwe from the northwest. He also had an amusing experience of Dimbudi, the chief of Kapali. He had seen him at his village shortly after arrival, but the Mambunda chief had not visited his camp; so in the interests of the commissariat Captain Quicke, a day or two later, made a second call on him. Dimbudi at first bolted, but ultimately thought better of it and returned. Captain Quicke now found him seated on his "throne, — a wooden chair carved with wooden images," — clad in an old black coat and the equally old top hat already introduced to the reader.

He then goes on to describe how from time to time he came across "symbols of idolatry, similar to those worshipped in India, and little spirit houses with food inside, where lived the guardian spirits." He found the inhabitants very timid, and though mostly armed with guns, they would invariably fly from his path when he took his solitary walks unarmed.

"After twelve days," he continues, "owing to general unhappiness, I could wait no longer and proceeded up the Kwando. The natives, having removed their canoes, would shout at us from the other bank."

Thus in spite of his wish to travel along the western bank, he was compelled to remain on the eastern side, where food was scarce and paths in places did not exist. After three days of this, some natives were surprised in the act of hastily removing a bridge constructed with the trunks and branches of small trees. Over what was left of it, Captain Quicke and his caravan were able to pass. The people, he complains, were not versed in the laws of hospitality. They were rich in cloth, guns, powder, and native foods, except meat; thus they had nothing to gain by being hospitable, for the usual "present in return" was a matter of indifference to them in their well-stocked condition. Among

them were Ovimbunda, "people of the West," known among the Marotse as "Mambare." These ubiquitous black traders carry trade articles into the most remote regions, and these they barter away for rubber, and — when they can get them — slaves and ivory. These people were inclined to be insolent in their bearing, and exercised an unwholesome influence on the local natives. In their country, the Portuguese are the only white men with whom they come in contact. Used to seeing Europeans carried about from place to place, avoiding the sun's rays, and having most things done for them, or at least exerting themselves as little as possible, in any effort to help themselves, they could not understand this Englishman in his travel-worn clothes, and shoeless, — for where the paths allowed it he frequently marched barefooted, — and surmised that his rank could not be of a high order. On one occasion, when excited with native beer, they were openly insolent, but soon learnt that they had to deal with a man. Then their whole tone altered, and much food and beer was laid at his feet after, according to custom, they had themselves tasted of it, as a proof that it was not poisoned. At the source of the Kwando he struck the lower of the two main trade routes to the east. This was the route followed fifteen years earlier by Mr. Arnot, the missionary traveller, and Senhor Silva Porto, a well-known Portuguese trader of the interior.

His Marotse now commenced to agitate in favour of an immediate return to their homes, but Captain Quicke would not give way, and led them in a northeasterly direction to the Lungwebungu River. The country traversed between the two rivers was hilly and wooded, and rises in places to about five thousand feet above the sea level. He was now in the country of the Vachibokwe, or Vachioko, which is remarkable for the almost entire absence of animal life. The inhabitants had long ago killed off everything that may have wandered through the forest in days past. So highly do they prize meat, that it is said they will pursue even a mouse to its extermination. Arriving at the Lungwebungu,

he found "a great river" which his boy Inchanga took to be "his beloved Zambezi." He followed the river down, and speaks of it as "the most navigable river in this part of Africa."

Whilst travelling through a corner of the Valuchasi country, he was much struck with the "homely ways" of the people. The men would bring their families to see the white man. Their singing, too, was striking. In the early morning, an hour before sunrise, men, women, and children would sing together before they dispersed to their work, which was mainly the collecting and working of rubber. The unexpected appearance of a white man would cause the inhabitants of small villages to run away and hide themselves, and, finding themselves feared, his following would become quite bold in their talk and bearing; but in the large ones the people, confident in their numbers, would remain, and then the tables would turn, and the members of the caravan would become timid and ill at ease. The Lungwebungu remains much the same throughout these latter four hundred miles of its course. It winds through the open grass valley, characteristic of the western rivers, and, where Captain Quicke first struck its course, is hemmed in by lofty, undulating hills, which gradually decrease in magnitude as the ground falls away toward the parent river.

As he neared the Zambezi, he had a few days of good sport in the Liuwa plain, and later, on entering the Mamboë country, he states, "Here we lived in clover, and I had some interesting shooting in the marshes after lechwe." This would seem to be the one short spell of sport he enjoyed throughout the whole of his fourteen-hundred-mile tramp. The keenest of sportsmen, chance had taken him through probably the most gameless district in the interior of the continent. I well know what a disappointment it must have been to him to be denied his favourite recreation; but whatever he felt of disappointment, he kept his thoughts to himself, for I never so much as heard him complain of his ill fortune in this respect.

Crossing the Zambezi to the north of its confluence with the Lungwebungu, he travelled down the eastern bank to Lialui, where — to reproduce his final remark on this particular journey — he says, "I found Major Gibbons returned from his journey as full of fresh plans as ever." But, as I pointed out to him, if arrangements "hang fire," or break down, fresh ones must be substituted at once, or the traveller will find himself in a sitting position.

The day after Captain Quicke's arrival, we lunched with Lewanika, and, as I find the menu jotted down in my diary, I will endeavour to give the reader a sketch of Lewanika at home in the luncheon hour.

The room in which we lunched was spacious and lofty. Native mat-work of varied pattern decorates both wall and floor. A clock on a wooden bracket, fly-whisks made from the tail of the eland, coloured cloth, and other odds and ends serve as additional ornaments. A mahogany table on castors, and some half-dozen European chairs, represent the furniture, while behind a high-backed wooden arm-chair — the royal seat at all interviews — the portrait of our late, much-loved Queen is fitted into a curtained recess. It is only at the reception of honoured guests, or on important occasions, that the curtains are drawn aside and the picture exposed to view. Lewanika had a respect almost amounting to worship for the "Great White Queen." From Livingstone's time onward he had been told of her fame and her virtues.

"I have heard white men speak of her since I was a little boy," he once said. "She was queen then, and she is still alive. I do not believe she will ever die." And again:—

"The Great White Queen must be great and good, for all white men, whether English or not, speak nothing but good of her."

After washing our hands with toilet soap, and drying them on a clean towel, we seated ourselves at the well-appointed table; the white cloth was scrupulously clean; knives, forks, and spoons highly polished. Dishes and plates were passed from one kneeling servant to another, until they reached the

hands of the head waiter, for in the king's presence no subject is allowed to stand upright. If this person had to rise at all in order to place the food on the table, he did so with bended knee and curved back. Before each servant touches the royal crockery he gives the accepted salute by clapping his hands.

The first course consisted of admirably cooked fried fish taken from the Zambezi, which contains a few species of excellent quality, in addition to others of a lower order. Roast wild goose and fried sweet potatoes came next, and this was followed by curdled milk with sugar, an excellent substitute for Devonshire junket. The bread was made of wheaten meal, ground by his servants from grain grown in the royal gardens. The seed had been supplied from the mission station. *A propos* of this wheat, there is an instance of Lewanika's shrewd commercial instincts. The mission, anxious to introduce and encourage the cultivation of a product so essential to the white man's table, persuaded the king to try the experiment, and supplied him with seed. The crop prospered exceedingly, and in due course was harvested and thrashed. The king quite fell in with the suggestion that he should sell a few bags to the missionaries.

"How much will you charge?" he was asked.

"What is it worth?" was the royal query.

"Oh, I suppose a pound a bag would be a good price."

"How much does it cost you to get your wheat here?" asked the king.

"We pay so much for it in the colony; it costs so much to transport it by rail, and afterward by waggon to Kazungula, and then so much for the journey up the river. Probably £3 is its cost by the time it reaches us."

"Then you may have as many bags as you like at £3 each." Nor would he see the argument that as it cost him nothing to grow he should be content with a smaller profit. He took a strictly economic view of the situation. "The cost of wheat at Lialui is £3 a bag. Why then should I receive less than its value?" And, after all, from a business

standpoint he was perfectly right, for there was no local competition.

After lunch, which was washed down by a cup of tea, we smoked our pipes and talked with our host. He spoke of his wish to introduce industries into his country; he would like his people to learn the crafts of the white man, and to cultivate the ground as the white man does. I recommended him to encourage his people to work for themselves, and not for him only, adding, "People do not make the most of their labours if the reward goes into other hands. If you keep your people poor, you can never hope to be rich yourself. If they prosper and become wealthy, you will not only become rich, but powerful."

The crowning mistake Lewanika makes, in common with most African chiefs, is that he claims as a royal monopoly everything of any value — leopard skins, ivory, rubber as well as honey, and certain wild fowl which he considers to be special dainties.

On the 24th, on the suggestion of Lewanika, Captain Quicke and myself were paddled upstream to an island twenty miles away, which is a favourite breeding ground for storks, ibis, divers, and other waterfowl. We were to witness the annual slaughter of the young of these birds. Most of the island is covered with reeds twelve feet high, and by the time we arrived in the evening, countless parent birds of every shape and size circled and hovered over their ill-fated young, on their return from the day's foraging. An hour before sunrise the camp was awake, and two or three hundred natives, some with and some without blankets, shivered in the damp morning mist, round meagre fires — for wood is scarce in Burotse.

By the time they had roused themselves to action, a cordon was thrown around the huge reed bed and this, amid a babel of yells and the beating of sticks, was gradually contracted toward the centre. And now the slaughter commenced, the younger birds falling an easy prey, while the more forward ones had strength enough to rise above the

heads of the beaters, but only to tire and come to the ground in the open space beyond, there to be chased and beaten to death by a crowd of shouting, laughing urchins. The bag was prodigious — literally thousands of birds were piled up in a row of great heaps like ricks in a hayfield. There was great feasting in Lialui and neighbourhood that evening, and something was left over for the next. Lewanika sent us several of the best birds ready cooked to sample, and very excellent they were — the divers especially so. These were tender and succulent and had not yet acquired the fishy taint of the older birds.

At last Captain Hamilton came in. He looked the very picture of health. Certainly his troubles did not appear to have done him any harm. After our parting in April, he followed the eastern bank of the Kwando as far as its confluence with the Lomba River. For the first day's march a northerly route took him through a flat country which may be described as park land — open spaces of grass, with clumps of trees dotted about at frequent intervals. Gradually the open spaces gave place to a savannah forest, in which the trees varied between twenty and forty feet in height, the denser clumps and belts of bush still remaining. Here, too, low undulations replace the flats to the south, and the firm sandy soil gives place to a lighter substance which makes travelling more irksome. The spoor of giraffe, zebra, and several kinds of antelope spoke of the existence of a certain quantity of game in the district. Passing through open swampy flats contiguous to the river and bordered by slightly rising forest land about four miles to the east, a second sudden turn in the course of the river took him in a northwesterly direction. In about 17° 20′ south latitude the Luiana, many of the upper tributaries of which I explored two or three weeks later, enters the Kwando through a delta formed in an alluvial plain. He now entered the long, low-lying section of the river distinguished by the name of Mashĕ, a sound identical with the English word which best describes the broad expanse of grass and water through



Making Preparations for the Night Before the Bird Hunt



In the Early Morning—Marotse Chiefs in the Background

which the river passes in more than one sluggish stream, broken up by innumerable reedy islands.

These islands are the resort of a low-class, timid, native community known as Bamashĕ. They cultivate small plots of land on the islands and near the mainland, largely supplementing their daily diet by fish from the river.

At Seluka he found the chief, who gives his name to the village, to be a kindly old man. The brother of the mokwai, Akanongiswa's husband, lives at his village, holding a superior position as a Marotse chief.

Here the difficulty of procuring sufficient carriers from the island-hidden natives impeded progress, owing to the excessive weight of the loads, distributed, as they were, among a few porters—a condition which bred discontent among them. However, his chiefs behaved well, and themselves buckled-to and carried. On the 30th of April the food question added further difficulty, and delay was necessary to enable him to procure game. On that day and the following a couple of lechwe were bagged, and a few miles' progress was made. Circumstances now became daily more embarrassing, as the people seem to have crossed the river, owing, no doubt, to a disinclination to be "fallen in" as carriers. As a consequence, food was scarce, and reports that there were scarcely any inhabitants on the mainland in front did not promise much improvement in the future.

For some distance from about 16° 50′ south latitude the river and water-logged basin through which it flows are very wide. As estimated by Captain Hamilton, the distance is about eight miles from bank to bank.

On the 13th of May the impending crisis burst over him; the porters had decamped, and he was powerless to move backward or forward. Fortunately the chiefs sent by Lewanika behaved excellently throughout. Camp was made on the opposite bank of the river, ten miles from the site of a village, formerly occupied by Monkoya, the fugitive elder brother of Lebebe, the usurper of the Mampukushu chieftainship. One of the head men was immediately despatched

to Lewanika, apprising him of the situation, and asking for fresh porters to take the place of the deserters. On the 1st of June, he removed to Monkoya's old village itself, and after five days went still farther up the river to old Wamanda. Till relief came, he occupied his time in the pursuit of game by day and the observing of stars by night, as well as keeping a daily record of barometrical readings and temperature at sunrise, noon, and sunset.

By the second week in June a relief party had arrived from Lialui, the river was recrossed at the same place, and the journey continued. He remained for two days opposite the confluence of the Lomba in 15° 35′ south latitude. Here the Kwando shows signs of narrowing, and a short distance beyond the Mashĕ swamps gives place to a bed winding through a grass valley about a mile in width, which is confined by undulating land covered with forest. Leaving the river, he passed through a flat plain, sparsely covered with trees in places, but otherwise open and marshy; then crossing a sluggish river — the Kapui — a twelve-mile march took him to the Mulai, which he followed to its source. A north-westerly course from here led him over a rapidly rising country to Kalomo, on the Kuti River, where stood the Portuguese trading station — now abandoned — at which Captain Quicke and myself had called on our journeys west and east respectively. From here he travelled east, following the Loeti River from its source to where I had struck it seventy miles lower down. Then he travelled along the route I had taken, and reached Lialui on the 1st of August — four months having elapsed since our ways parted on the Lower Kwando. He had made an important addition to our map, his journey, added to Captain Quicke's, supplying the whole course of the Kwando from its southernmost point to its source.

Mr. Coryndon arrived on the 12th of August, his considerate thoughtfulness having prompted him to bring five donkeys in place of others which a young trader had under-



Captain Hamilton's Arrival

taken to purchase for me in Buluwayo, neither he nor the donkeys having been heard of since.

We remained at Lialui a further three weeks. Since the supplies had been cut off by the failure of the steamer party to join us, it had become a practical impossibility for the three of us to cut through the continent northward to Egypt, besides which the term for which the War Office had allowed the services of my companions to the expedition had nearly expired, and I did not feel justified in protracting their journey farther than the essential interests of the work undertaken demanded. Captain Hamilton was anxious to return *via* the Zambezi, and his wishes in every way suited my plans, as he would not merely be able to connect the two sections of my '95–'96 work in their northern limit, but had kindly undertaken to act for me in any matter requiring settlement on the Lower Zambezi, where the steamers and goods were stranded. He would therefore follow the eastern Luena and travel to the Kafukwe, in the neighbourhood of Nkala, trace that river to the unexplored falls and cataracts, which must account for the rapid drop in its altitude from about thirty-five hundred to a little over two thousand feet, and then descend the Zambezi to Chinde. Captain Quicke was indifferent as to his route, so long as he did not return by his old footsteps. It was therefore decided that he should explore the northern section of the eastern Luena system, thence travel partly up the Kabompo toward the Zambezi sources, and, following the river to Nanakandundu, should make for the west coast, and thus add to his long journey in Marotseland the crossing of the continent from east to west, in the accomplishment of which he would have travelled far enough to take him there and back again, were his objects those of the globe-trotter. As I was loth to make the trip to Cairo and leave my friends to less interesting routes, I elected to accompany Captain Quicke. However, so far as I was concerned, the plan was doomed to modification. Mr. Coryndon insisted that it was my obvious duty to take the northerly route; I insisted otherwise. Once more he re-

turned to the attack, and after an argument lasting three hours I succumbed, although I failed to see, so long as the work undertaken was carried out to the letter, what it could matter whether I found the coast in the north, south, east, or west. His contention that I would probably find opportunity to add useful work to the credit of the expedition in the north, seemed sound, and looking at the question in the light of subsequent experience, I confess my opinion to be that he was right, and by following his advice I did the proper thing.

On the 1st of September the four of us ate a pleasant little dinner under cover of the banana trees that graced our camping ground. Mr. Coryndon was on the eve of returning to England by Cape Town, and Captains Quicke and Hamilton and myself were going west, east, and north respectively. We all hoped to meet again in London in the course of some months. That evening — the last on which we were to be together — I felt keenly how fortunate I had been in my companions. Mutual confidence and perfect concord had been the rule, without the tempering of the single exception which is said to prove it. How I hoped that they would reach their destination without mishap, and that we should all live to enjoy a friendship which, unimpaired and intensified, had passed the test of African travel — the greatest of all tests. When, still in the heart of Africa a few months later, I read in the Press that Major Gibbons had quarrelled with all his companions, that they had left him, and that the expedition had broken up and proved a failure, I felt that I could well afford to smile and leave facts to speak for themselves.


00058507

Digitized with financial assistance from


HT Parekh
FOUNDATION

An Initiative by
HDFC
WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

on 15 October, 2018